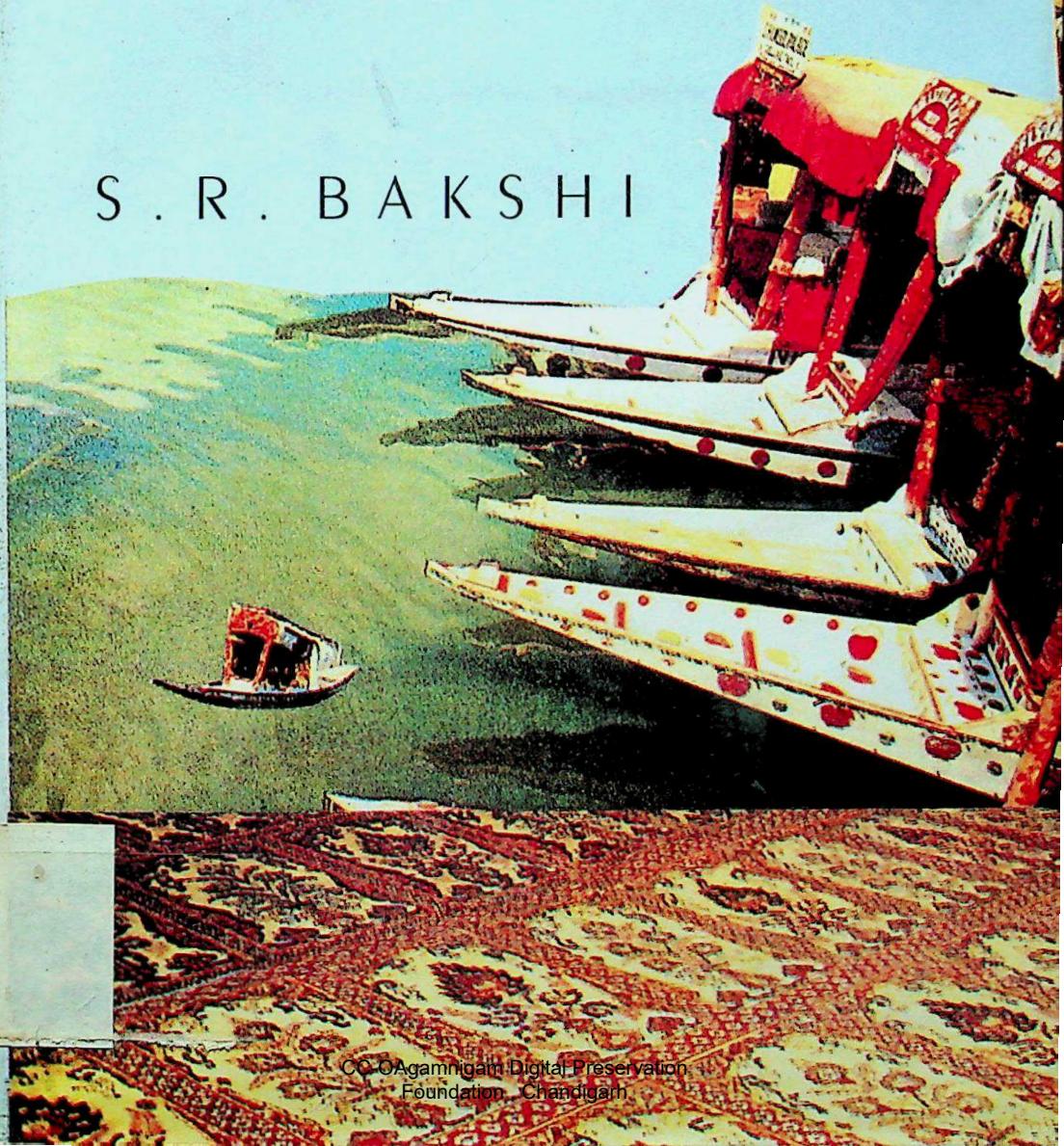


KASHMIR THROUGH AGES

Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu

VOLUME **3**

S. R. BAKSHI



The volumes in this set deal with the history, society and culture of Kashmir Valley in ancient, medieval and modern periods. They depict its developments under several rulers, Hindus, Muslims, Afghans, Sikhs and Dogras. The Valley indeed is very attractive in many ways and tourists from Asian and European countries show deep interest in its romantic setting. Several Himalayan ranges, lakes, rivers, springs, temples, mosques, churches, snowy peaks, fruits and simple life of the people in the rural areas speak of its richness in beauty.

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Preface

The valley of Kashmir, Ladakh and Jammu ruled by Hindu, Muslim, and Dogra rulers pose a serious problem on account of their geographical situation. Its beautiful and scenic beauty of mountains, rivers, lakes, several kinds of fruit, flora and fauna and healthy climate, attract the attention of millions of tourists from all over the world. Rightly compared with Switzerland in many ways, people throng here to enjoy their time at several places which indeed have historical and religious importance. You may find here old monuments, temples and mosques built here long time back. The carpets, shawls handicrafts, apples and other fruits catch the attention of exporters all over the world. Millions of rupees are collected from these exports.

I have dealt with numerous themes having bearing on the Kashmir valley. These are geography, people, cradle of several races, Ladakh—its people and culture, Muslim, Afghan, Sikh and Dogra rulers, Gilgit, Buddhist monuments, Srinagar—the valley, food-habits of people, rivers and towns, the Kashmiri Pandits, social life, society and religion, lakes-Dal Lake and Wular Lake, temples, folklore and folk-songs, Sheikh Abdullah as leader, internal problems, political correspondence, speeches of Sheikh Abdullah, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, problem of accession, role of the Security Council, role of Frank Graham and Gunnar Jarring, speeches of Menon Chagla and statement by Mridula Sarabhai.

I have collected the material from several institutions, viz.

the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Delhi University Library, Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, Sapru Huse Library, Parliament House Library and last but not the least, Indian Council of Historical Research Library, New Delhi. I feel much beholden to the authorities of these institutions for their academic support to me during my researches.

—S. R. Bakshi

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Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu

1

Dal Lake and Gardens

This lovely sheet of water, which lies close on the outskirts of Srinagar, has been held to be the most beautiful in the world, and, even if this is admittedly an exaggeration, it would be a difficult task to name any other so beautiful a lake situated almost at the door of a large city. The lake itself is five miles long and nearly half as broad, but it is divided by causeways into two distinct portions, each of which has a number of minor off-shoots, and a large proportion of its surface is covered with floating gardens and beds of bushes, which grow in size as the summer advances, so that the general effect is then somewhat spoilt. But the ring of high mountains, which extend almost to the edge of the water on the northern and eastern sides, and which are still capped with snow when spring in the valley is far advanced, the delicate colouring of the poplar and willow trees, and those beautiful islets, Sona and Rupa Lank, all combine to render a very perfect picture of natural beauty; a picture that is duplicated in every detail in the clear snow-fed waters of the lake.

Beautiful though the Dal lake is at every season of the year, it is, however, incomparably at its best in mid-summer, when the lotus is in flower. The masses of these great pink water-flowers, which cover large areas of the surface of the lake, are a wonderful sight, and though they may, perhaps, be

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seen to even better advantage at Manasbal, they bring thousands of admirers from the city to view them, and even attract some of the less ardent golfers from their cool links at Gulmarg.

The floating gardens, which are mostly situated on the western side of the lake, are well worth a short visits. They are prepared in early spring when the level of the water is at its lowest. Bushes are cut and tied together in large masses, which are then towed to a suitable site, where they are bound in strips a few feet wide and perhaps forty or fifty yards in length. These strips are staked to the muddy floor of the lake, and water-weeds and a certain amount of earth are piled on the foundation so formed. A large variety of excellent vegetables are grown in these floating gardens and are sent daily into Srinager, where they find a ready market.

Leaving the Dal Gate, which is the narrow entrance to the lake from the Tsunt-i-Kol, the canal which connects it with the Jhelum, and through whcih the water rushes with such force that it is frequently a matter of considerable difficulty to get the heavy and awkward house-boats through in safety, the visitor will proceed in his shikara down a long lane of clear water, bordered on either side by rows of moored house-boats and masses fo tall bushes and water-weeds, until, after a mile or so, the lake opens out. To the right there are more house-boats, but in the opposite direction there is an extensive view and the full beauty of the lake can be first appreciated.

At Gagribal, lying almost in the shadow of the Takht, there is a large expanse of clear water, where, according to tradition, in the days when the shawl-making industry was at its height, the rarest and the best shawls were taken to be washed in the cold spring water, which was suposed to have the effect of imparting a peculiar softness to the fabric. To-day it is used chiefly as a bathing place and a raft is moored some way out for the bathers to rest on.

A word of warning regarding bathing in the Dal Lake, or else where, except in recognised bathing places, is desirable, as the water-weeds, which grow to a great length, are sometimes dangerous. Divers get entangled among them and cannot escape,

and numeous drowning tragedies have occurred in this way.

Many people do not like bathing at Gagribal owing to the number of house-boats and doongas that are moored nearby, and prefer, instead, to go to Nagim, which is undeniably cleaner and more pleasant, but has the disadvantage of being a good deal further away. A popular form of amusement, when the moon is full, is to arrange a bathing picnic at Nagim with supper afterwards, either on the lake, or at one of the dozens of attractive spots along its shores, and it would be difficult to imagine a pleasanter setting for such an affair.

Round the shores of the lake there are numbers of places of interest, the chief of which are, of course, the far-famed Moghul gardens. Most of these places can easily be reached by motor car along the road that runs past the foot of the Takht and through the village of Gupkar, but it is usually more convenient and less tiring to visit them by boat.

Starting on the circuit of the lake in an anti-clockwise direction, Chasma Shahi is the first place that shoudl be visited. It is situated at some distance back from the lake and consists of a beautifully situated spring of clear water gushing from the mountain side, round which the Emperor Shahjehan laid out a garden and built a pavilion. A considerable area of land in this neighbourhood is covered with vines, and years ago, under the direction of an enterprising Frenchman, a very fair wine was prepared from these Kashmir grapes, but phylloxera appeared, the quality of the wine deteriorated and the industry is now moribund. Two miles furthher and we come to the Nishat Bagh, which, owing to its beautiful situation and easy accessibility, is the most visted of the gardens and is a popular resort of the townsfolk, crowds of whom, dressed in their best clothes, resort there on Sundays and holidays.

The garden, which is enclosed by a high wall, covers a considerable area and extends far up the hill-side in a series of twelve terraces carpeted with turf. Behind tall bare mountains rise precipitously. A stream runs through the middle of the garden in a series of cascades and fountains, and, when the fountains are playing, the effect is, of course, vastly improved.

The presence of this stream must have gladdened the eyes of the Moghul gardeners, whose chief difficulty in the plains was the provision of the copious supply of water, on which they relied so greatly to produce the effects that they admired.

The garden has suffered from years of neglect. Many of the pavilions are in ruins and, delightful though it still is, Nishat would no doubt bring tears to the eyes of its Moghul builders, who, as their sole crumb of comfort, would be forced to admire the incomparable chenars that adorn the upper terraces, which now are the chief glory of the garden, and which could have been no more than newly planted saplings in their day. These upper terraces rise to a considerable height above the lake and delightful views can be obtained from them framed in the foliage of the chenars.

A full understanding of these Moghul gardens, the ideas of their originators, and the difficulties that they had to contend with, will lead to a greater appreciation of their beauties, in the same way that a piece of fine music can only be fully understood by the educated listener. Mrs. C. M. Villiers Stuart's book, "The Gardens of the Great Moghuls," supplies this information, and makes one realise how it was that a formal garden, with conventional watercourses, fountains and cool pavilions, though entirely different from the naturel effects that are generally sought after to-day, was the obvious form suited to the several limits and the heat and dust of such places as Delhi and Lahore, in which they were perfected.

At Harwan, some way beyond the Nishat Bagh, and close to the Shalimar garden, the reservoir, which supplies Srinagar with drinking water, is situated at a distance of two miles or more back from the lake. Modern visitors, perhaps, may not realise what a boon this supply of pure water is to a city, which is for ever threatened by an outbreak of cholera in epidemic form, and how rarely such a supply is to be found in any but the largest eastern cities. The water is stored in an artificial reservoir, which was built in 1901. All human inhabitations have been removed from the catchment area of the valley in which it is situated, and no person is allowed to

enter this area on any account, so that the chance of the supply being contaminated at its source is thus reduced to a minimum.

At Harwan, also, a successful trout hatchery has been established with ova sent from Europe. A number of streams in the valley have been stocked with trout in recent years, and some of the fish attain to a considerable size, rise freely to an artificial fly, and now afford very fair fishing. Near by there is the Maharajah's Model Farm, stocked with animals and poultry imported from England.

Shalimar Bagh, two miles further on, is not so well situated as the Nishat Bagh, as it is on almost level ground and is separated from the lake by a considerable expanse of low-lying land. It is approached along a narrow canal shaded by chenar trees. The garden is laid out in a series of low terraces and is surrounded by a wall. At the further end, which was reserved for the ladies of the Imperial harem, there is a very handsome pavilion of black marble with beautifully carved pillars standing in the middle of an artificial reservoir lined with marble. There is a tradition that this garden was once much larger than it is to-day, and the remains of ancient masonry outside the wall which surrounds it, and between the garden and the lake, lend weight to this assumption.

After leaving the Shalimar Bagh and passing the mouth of the Arrah, or Telbal river, which is navigable for some distance from its mouth, Nasim Bagh, on the western side of the lake, is reached. Nasim is now hardly more than a park, as the wall that surrounded it has almost disappeared and the ruins of its buildings are hidden by low mounds of grass-covered earth. But its fine chenar trees, now, alas, far past their prime, and its air of ancient neglect are so completely in accord with the indefinable melancholy of a still summer evening, that it is, perhaps, at times the most charming spot on the shores of this delightful lake.

Some little distance from the Nasim Bagh there is the large mosque, or ziarat, of Hazratbal, which is celebrated as containing a hair of the prophet, purchased, so tradition has it, by a wealthy merchant for a lakh of rupees a thousand years ago.

Festivals are held here from time to time, and twice a year, in May and August, the hair is produced before vast numbers of devout Mahomedans assembled together from all parts of the valley.

Hazratbal virtually completes the circuit of the lake, for, although it is still almost an hour's journey back to the Dal Gate, the remainder of the distance lies through a canal and a series of small open spaces of water, and here, except for the ever-changing display of the domestic life of the inhabitants of the city, there is not much of interest to detain the sight-seer.

During pre-historic times, when the valley of Kashmir was drained off, big lakes and marshy lands were left behind. Among the lakes still extant is the Wular lake, a part of which became navigable in course of time by small boats. The streams and canals served the population as highways and the floating houses with many designs, size and forms became an essential part of the communication system in the State. From Abul Fazal's *Ain-i-Akbari* we learn that boats were the centre upon which all commerce moved and that in Kashmir there was made a model of a ship that astonished every one who saw it. The great Mughal Emperor Akbar on his visit to Kashmir, ordered that on the Bengal Model double storeyed residential, floating houses, with fine windows, be built. Within a few days, thousand boats were got ready and a floating city was visible on the waters of Kashmir.

All the important capitals and cities were located on the banks of the Jhelum. We still see that between the villages there is communication through boats. The city of Srinagar has been rightly called the 'Venice of the East' with river Jhelum as its Arno'.

The Kashmiri took to boat life from very ancient times. He belongs to a tribe which was very important and prominent. Boat dwellers are an important class in the socio economic life of the people of Kashmir. Sir Walter Lawrence tells us that King Parvna Sen introduced boat-men a Hanz in Kashmir from Sangal dip (Modern Singa Pur) to Kashmir during the 6th century A.D. On the other hand, our first Chronicler, Kalhana

Pandit, says that they were originally inhabitants of the valley who were relegated to menial work by Aryan settlers. They were known as Nishads before they accepted Islam as their faith. Shrivara and Sayyid Ali, Chroniclers of 16th century, call them Dhivar and Kasrjian respectively. They claim prophet Noah as their ancestor. Some accounts point out to a gipsy origin. They belonged to the Vaisya caste and even now Hanjis (boatmen) call other tribes as Shooders or Sudras. Hanjis have borrowed the pattern of their boats from Noah's art.

They live permanently in these floating houses with their families. The father of a family is an autocrat and his discipline on board is often of a violent character indeed

Kashmiri is an intelligent and clever carpenter, says Young-husband. He has never gone out of the valley, yet has an excellent knowledge of boat craft. The pioneer of modern education in Kashmir, Canon Tyndale Biscoe says "to respect the boatmen in their work, as boatmen for they have delighted me over and over again in their knowledge of boat craft, for they are kings at it. Then again they can work hard. They will tour your boat up, stream all day and if really necessary will continue all night". There are many sub-divisions in the Hanji tribe. There are the half amphibious paddlers of the Dal Lake, known as 'Demb Hanz'. They were vegetable gardeners and bring vegetables in small boats for sale to the city. Their boat is called Demovar. They now live in small huts in the Dal Lake. The boatmen of the Wular Lake are known as 'Gari Hanz', They gather Singhara nuts in the lake and live on the income from the sale. They live in boats and houses on the banks of this lake. These two sections of Hanjis held their head high among other Hanjis and do not marry out of their caste. Next in respectability come the boatmen who live on large barges, known as bahats, in which cargo of about 800 maunds of grain and wood is imported into the city. This type of boat has a high prow and stern. After it is a cabin with three rooms in which the boatman and his family live. There is another section of Hanjis known as Dung Hanz who carry passengers and sometimes load from one place to another. Their floating house is about 50 to 60 feet in length and about

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six to eight feet in width in the centre. It has a sloping roof of matting and also side walls. Dung Hanjis are very muscular and active people. Their floating houses are used for short sojourns in the lake by visitors as the boat alternative to a tent. Then at another stage during the Maharaja's Govt the Dung was transformed in a modern house boat by Mr. Kenand. He is the first Englishman to have built the modern houseboat, supplanting the old Larinav in Kashmir during the last decade of 10th century. Every Dunga is a floating house and a hotel in miniature. The Dung Hanjis' profession has to some extent dwindled and they have now taken to other vocations. The economic condition has improved and are now satisfied with their lot. Some of them own buses and load-carriers.

Then there is another section of this tribe which is known Gadhanz or fishermen, who do nothing of fish. They surpass even the Danghanz in their power of investments. Some of them live in small floating houses throughout the year while others in huts on river banks. They help their relatives in distress, especially when a storm breaks out over Wular Lake. Thus they have close community feelings and their economic lot has improved.

Another small section of the tribe is Haka Hanz who make their livelihood by dredging for drift-wood in rivers and bringing it to the city for sale as fuel for winter. They live in their own small floating houses throughout the year. They cook their food in earthen utensils. Lastly we have one more section of Hanjis known as Mata-Hanjis. They deal in the sale of firewood, bricks, lime etc, and are now economically more prosperous than all other sections of Hanjis. They have now Jhelum and Tsunti Khul canal in their mansions. Since the carriage of goods and passengers in the valley was done by boats, the life of a boatman was prosperous. He did not like to build a house on the land but preferred river life where his brethren lived in floating houses.

Living in a floating house is quite different from living on land. There are few more pleasant experiences than being towed up the river in a floating house. When one travels from

one place to another in a boat there is no packing to be done without delay, the floating houses moves to a place one desires. To make the tourist industry flourish in Kashmir it is necessary that more and more floating houses be constructed and furnished. This will improve the economy of the State especially during the summer months.

They do not give education to their children but marry them at an early age. They are the most backward class among Kashmiri muslims, socially and educationally. Their percentage in education is nil. They are a muscular, active people. Their paddling is heart shaped and can steer the boat wonderfully without causing any damage. In every sect of Hanjis, caste rules are strictly followed. They do not inter-marry among themselves. Non-Hanjis never enter into matrimonial alliance with Hanjis. Quarrelling is very common among 'bahach Hanjis' (Hanjis who are transporters of grain especially). One can find their quarrelling near the bank of Jhelum and Tsunti Khul canal even late in the evening where they live in majority. That has given them evil reputation in the eyes of visitors and other local inhabitants. The latter do not mix with them only on this ground. Their expenses on marriages are very simple and meagre compared with other sects. Only their economic condition has improved and now they (Hanjis) own buses and carrier trucks but do not prefer to leave boat life.

2

Gulmarg

As the summer advances Srinagar becomes somewhat warm to be comfortable. The days are oppressive and the nights no longer refreshing, and Society begins to consider moving to Gulmarg, which fills up towards the end of May, though a few hardy visitors go there much earlier, when the snow has hardly left the golf course and an occasional belated ski-runner may still be discovered lurking on Killanmarg. Gulmarg is situated in an undulating basin about three thousand feet above the valley and two thousand feet above Tangmarg, which is the village where the motor road from Srinagar ends, and is surrounded by extensive forests of pine. Above, the main range of the Pir Panjal rises to height of over fourteen thousand feet and below the wooded hills fall steeply to the level of the plain.

The distance to Tangmarg from Srinagar is twenty-four miles along a good road, and motors and lorries for heavy luggage can easily be hired for the journey.

From Tangmarg a well graded pony-track leads up to Gulmarg, and tats or dandies can be obtained to carry those who are not sufficiently young or energetic enough to make the ascent on foot. The road branches off from the main Baramulla road about eight miles out of Srinagar, close to the famous Hokra Jheel, and for the last few miles rises steadily, until

Tangmarg is reached, whence the remainder of the journey must be completed either on foot or by pony. There are two routes up from Tangmarg, the main bridle path, which is zig-zags and has an easy gradient throughout, and the coolie track, which runs straight up the face of the khud, and, though considerably shorter, is very steep.

At Gulmarg there are all the usual amenities of a hill station, and most of the hotels, shops and boarding houses of Srinagar open branches there during the short summer season, which lasts from June until about the end of September. The Maharajah has a house there, and there is the Residency, church and club, with two golf courses and several hard tennis courts, so altogether life in Gulmarg need never be dull. The climate is delightfully cool even in the middle of the summer, but the one great drawback is the heavy rainfall, which far exceeds that of the valley.

Most of the visitors live in wooden huts dotted about the low hill-sides bordering on the marg. These huts are really bungalows with several rooms. They are usually fairly well furnished, and can be made very comfortable at small expense. One of moderate size can be rented for about eight hundred rupees for the season, and sometimes less. There is also Nedou's hotel and several boarding houses for those who prefer to avoid the worries of house-keeping. Living is slightly more expensive than in Srinagar as all supplies have to be carried up the hill.

Golf is the chief form of amusement and competitions are held almost daily. There are two first-class courses, which are certainly the best in India, and golf in Gulmarg is played in surroundings that are almost English, even to the frequent rain. A big tennis tournament is held each year and dances take place at Nedou's hotel several times a week.

For people who prefer the simple life there are innumerable delightful walks through the forest, which extends for miles on either hand, or over the open uplands between the tree-line and the snows. Through the clearings in the forest and from the lower slopes of Apharwat there are incomparable views of

the valley, Sunset Peak and the stupendous mass of Nanga Parbat, rising to a height of 26,620 feet, nearly ninety miles away to the north.

Nanga Parbat is the ninth highest mountain in Asia and one of the very few really great mountains that are easily visible from a centre of civilisation. It is also one of the few great peaks that is a peak in the literal sense. This, coupled with its isolated position, makes it one of the most imposing mountains in the world, for it towers more than nine thousand feet above every summit within a radius of sixty miles. Wonderful though it appears from Gulmarg, it is even more impressive when viewed from the north, where the Indus flows along the bed of a stupendous gorge, and an observer on the further side can see towering above him no less than twenty-three thousand feet of cliff and crag and glacier, culminating at a distance of a few miles in this glorious summit; a view, perhaps, that is not equalled, and certainly is not excelled, by any in the world, but which, owing to its remoteness, can be seen only by a fortunate few.

There are several longer expeditions which can be made in the course of a single day : down the steep sides of the Ferozepore nullah, to picnic beside its icy waters, in which there are numbers of small snow trout : or up the further side to the ruined tower at Damdama : or to Killanmarg and over the top of Apharwat to the Frozen Lakes on the further side. It is a long expedition to the top of Apharwat and entails a climb of over five thousand feet, but the masses of flowers in the woods and on the lower slopes above the tree-line, and the magnificent views from the summit will repay the effort.

Further afield a number of delightful trips can be made in the direction of the Tosh Maidan, the Chor Panjal pass and Tutakuti. Coolies for transport are sometimes difficult to obtain and those taken from Gulmarg will probably have to be kept throughout the trip, as places where others can be obtained are few. Applications for coolies should be addressed to the Tehsildar at Gulmarg. The usual rate is fixed for each march, according to its length and difficulty.

The Pir Panjal range has been much neglected, but, when the rainy mid-summer months are over and the air is crisp with the promise of autumn, a short trip along its northern side is a delightful experience. The marches are short and easy, in the woods and upland meadows, deserted for nine months of every year, there are masses of glorious flowers, and, rising above, are friendly snow peaks, interspersed with rocky crags and lovely mountain tarns, and there is none of the overwhelming size and desolation of the further Himalayas.

PAHALGAM AND ITS ENVIRONS

The Lidder Valley

The Lidder valley forms the north-eastern corner of the Kashmir vale. It has a pleasant and mild look and calm and peaceful atmosphere is radiated from sober forest-covered slopes and woodlands which border this valley.

The world 'Lidder' is a corruption of lambo-dari which means a goddess 'long-bellied'. The main stream receives a number of tributaries from both banks. The first mountain torrent rises from Shisheram Nag and carving a deep gorge round the Pisu Hill, flows past Thanin or Tsandanwari on to Pahalgam. At Tsandanwari another tributary rising from Astan Marg, a stream of pure water mainly from springs joins it on the right. Near Pahalgam a torrent rising from the snout of Kolahoi valley, the water from the Tar Sar lake joins it on the right at Lidderwat, and a stream from Katri Nag near Arau, enters it, the whole volume of water, swelling and flowing with rapidity to join another stream at Pahalgam. It is this stream rising from the Kolahoi glacier, which is called Lambodari. It passes through Lidderwat which means Lambodarwat (Lambodar's stone) where in olden days the god Ganesh must have been worshipped, and it is also here that the tributary from the sacred lake of Tar Sar joins the Lambodari.

The Lidder irrigates a large rich tract of alluvial soil and for miles from either of its banks one can see a green sea of rice-fields during the summer. Occasionally, the white wings of terns is the fields throw th greens of the fields into bold relief.

The aqueducts full of glacial water infuse life everywhere and we hear the rush and flow of water all along.

A canal has been opened from the Lambodari at Ganishpor to water the Mattan Uder (plateau). This canal is called Shah Kol.

Picturesque villages are scattered all over the landscape. They are nestled among huge shady chinar, mulberry, poplar and willow trees. The walnut, apple and pear trees with drooping branches laden with fruits intercept the rays of the sun. Sometimes hay is stacked on trees for the winter fodder of animals.

The houses are generally two storeys high, the ground storey consisting of cattle-shed. A portion of the room is covered with a ceiling on which the children of the family and guests sleep in winter, the room being made comfortably warm by the breath of animals. Only a very small window opens from this part of the ground floor which is called 'dangij'.

The second storey consists of a verandah and two or three rooms. In summer they sit and cook in the verandah and in winter in the rooms inside. Some have handlooms for weaving blankets or coarse cotton cloth. Here are also large earthenware cauldrons in which they store various kinds of seeds for their forms. In winter women are at work on the spinning wheel.

The roof is generally covered with rice grass. It is very steep so that rain and snow easily slip down. the loft is a store-room where grass from rice, ropes of dried turnips, with beans, knol khol and wild vegetables such as wopal hak (*Dipsacus inermis*) and hand chicory are kept hanging.

A barn and a fowl-pen are generally found in the compound. The rich farmers have several barns wherein they store rape-seed, maize, linseed and other produce of their farms till their price rises to the maximum when they dispose off their stocks. Thus they accumulate wealth which should not be the sole aim of man in this world. He has been taught from time to time by higher soul who have appeared on the world's stage

in different epochs to be unselfish, and mitigate the sorrows of the destitutes. Unless we raise ourselves to that level, we are not true men and can only be a burden to society. Glimpses of the Great illumine our path here and there and this keeps the world from being engulfed in total darkness.

Trees round the village vibrate with the celestial music of their feathery denizens in the months of May and June. Out in the rice-fields on a solitary tree or on telegraph wires a roller (nila krosh) flunting its blue green plumage may be seen watching its prey. The paradise fly-catcher (phambaseer) in his angelic white and black garb opens the orchestra long before the break of dawn. It is followed by Tickell's thrush with its yellow beak grey body incessantly singing at the top of its voice untiringly night on to sunrise. The golden oriole in his royal bright yellow breast and pink beak sends forth his liquid note. Now the ring doves from various quarters join the concert. The song is now in full swing. Later on the bulbul, the starling, the myna, the sparrow and occasionally the jackdaw chirp and contribute to the concordance of the chorus. Some other birds too in their own way make a display of their musical talent. The rufous-backed shrike which is a mimic does not withhold its harsh note. The wry neck clinging to the willow harps on its fine six-note chirp. The tree creeper with its long curved beak and striped back scours the tree from stem to top for its food. The tits with their white cheeks and white bars in their wing strike a creaking note. If the village happens to be near a mountain the gregarious black bulbuls make their appearance with their red beaks and legs and adds a sweet whistle to the harsh noise and the streaked-laughing thrush join in with its delicious whistle like note. The cockoe and the hoopoe also string their harps. The kite screams from the top of a mulberry or chinair tree. The song gradually subsides as the orb or the day begins to flood our planet with his brilliance. What a blissful hour it is for him who keeps his ears open to receive this heavenly music and thereby merges his spirit with the universal soul that pervades the universe !

Attached to every house is a small craft where the farmers cultivate their vegetables-knol khol, egg plant, gourd, cucumbers,

beans and pumpkins. A small rill diverted from the main canal passes through the croft and even enters their compound where they clean their utensils. The water rills wash the roots of the willow leaving them red and these are sometimes used by thrushes to build their nests on.

In the village there is always a mosque and a bathing house and sometimes a temple on a spring dedicated to some god or goddess. A village may also contain a ziarat or shrine sacred to some saint which sometimes has artistic lattice-windows and of which the roof is always covered with either red tulips, crown imperialis or iris. The village grave-yard is generally covered with white and mauvie iris. At Aker there is a shiv-emblem bearing one thousand marks representing so many Shivic images, probably a remnant of those emblems which were made by the pious king Sandemati, (34 B.C. - A.D. 13) who renounced his throne and dedicated his later life to the service of the spiritual seminary at Sodura, in Wangat valley. The remains of this institution are still to be seen at the foot of Butsher at the head of the Wangat valley. There is also at this place a spring called Naran Nag where pilgrims on their return from Gangabal give away staves and grass shoes to Brahmins.

INTERESTING SITES EN ROUTE FROM SRINAGAR TO PAHALGAM

Pandrenthan

This place is about 4 miles from Srinagar. Here was the old capital of Kashmir, which was founded by king Ashoka of Buddhist fame. The word is a corrupt form of Purana-old, adhish-than-capital. There is now a cantonment at this place. Not very far from the road there is a very low spring in the middle of which stands a beautiful stone temple. The roof of the temple consists of one stone artistically carved. This was erected by Meru the minister of king Partha who ruled Kashmir from 921-931 A.D. It was dedicated to Vishnu and was called Meru Vardhana Swami. It must have been a place of pilgrimage in the olden times. Mention of its has been made in the Amar Nath Mahatmya, but the place now lost its sacred

associations.

Pantachok

About six miles from Srinagar there is a stone quarry where towards the road side stands a stone image of Ganesh which is besmeared with red-lead. It is said that just opposite this image is a spring in the middle of the river. There is myth that when the Vetrasta flowed down the valley for the first time the whole of it was drunk by god Ganesh and for sometime the river disappeared till the god was appeased and the river flowed again.

On the other side of the road there is a mosque which was built by Haba Khotan the queen of the Epicurian king Yusuf Chak (1578-1584 A.D.). The mosque was exclusively made of wooden slabs, but now it has been rebuilt with stone in the modern style. Closeby, another mountain spur also a quarry, a little out of the way towards Zewan village, contains fossils of marine animals and plants which testifies to the fact that the land was once under the sea.

Pampor

This is a small town about nine miles from Srinagar. Its alluvial plateau has saffron beds which impart a glorious beauty colour to the place in the late autumn. From the plateau we see a dharmasala (an inn) and a temple on a mountain spur in the north-east built by Dr. Balkrishen Koul in memory of his mother. This spot is dedicated to goddess Jwala which points to the probability of the existence here in olden times of a volcanic strata or the occurrence of a slight volcanic eruption. Hence the place is considered sacred like Kangra. An annual fair is held here on Ashada Choturdashi when people offer the lungs of sheep and cooked rice coloured yellow as a sacrifice to the goddess. Near the temple are sloping smooth slabs of stone down which children love to slide. At the foot of the hill is a spring round which a festival is held on the day. The spring is sacred to the Hindus, and is one of the guardian goddess of the pandits. The place is a fine resort for outing for the city people.

On the plateau there is a cedar round which there are stone images which are dedicated to goddess Bala. H.H. the late Maharaja Partap Singh used often to visit the place as a pilgrim.

The depression in the village is called Lalla-trag. This place was the birth place of Lalla the saint. It was also the favourite haunt of the Razdan family, the famous votaries of the Shiva cult. Here is also a beautiful Ziarat of Mir Mohammad Hamadani.

Awantipora

This is the site of the ancient city of that name founded by king Advantivarman who ruled Kashmir from A.D. 855 to 883. The ruins of two temples which lie here about show that the dedicated one is Shiva and the other to Vishnu. The impressive architecture, the artistic carvings on the pillars, the magnificence of the design bewilder the on-looker. This was a place of pilgrimage in olden times. When there was no wheeled traffic and people used to travel on foot from Srinagar to Anantnag, there were professional masseurs who used to massage people to remove their fatigue. This was done without using any kinds of oil. They were called Motshah. People gathered round a huge bubble-bubble and smoked tobacco till sunset. This was called Wontpor Jajir (the bubble-bubble of Awantipor).

Bijbihara

The place is called Kashi of Kashmir. There existed a very grand and large temple just in the middle of the present town where a small temple has been lately erected by the people. It is said that the temple was so high that its shade at sunset rested on the Martand plateau. This temple had a strong wall round it. This spot has been the target of numerous attacks by herds of hillmen during the Middle Ages.

Sikander Butshekan (A.D. 1394-1416) demolished the great temple and on one of its stones found in inscription which runs thus : 'Bismullehim maintrena nashanti vijayishwara' (by the incantation of Bismullah the temple of Vajishwara will be demolished). He is said to have been struck with remorse in later life for destroying those temples and incurring everlasting

stigma for this vandalism. Sikander died in A.D. 1416. It is possible that the raised part of the town was built on the debris of this huge temple when in course of centuries earth covered and concealed the debris.

There is a stone temple built by Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1857-1885) outside the town on the bank of the Vetsasta. There is a small ghat to the south-east of the temple. Here is a big Shivaling and the walls contain stone images. It is called Raja Hari Chandra's ghat and much sanctity is attached to it. Tradition says that every day two souls who end their earthly sojourns here go to Nirvana. Just outside the temple there are huge chinars on both the banks of the river which were once joined by a bridge. There is a chinar on the left bank the trunk of which has a circumference of 56 feet the largest in Kahsmir. This garden was planted by Mughal rulers.

In the town there is a mosque which has a stone in which there is imbedded an iron axe supposed to have been driven into wall of the mosque by a Hindu saint Shankar to give stability to the mosque. Hence it is now called 'Shankaran Mokots' (Shankar's axe).

On the right bank there is a plateau called Tsakadar (Tsakara dhar a name given to Vishnu). In olden times this was a place of great importance, but no trace of any temple is to be found here now. The religiously minded people go round (prakram) it to gain merit.

On the plateau towards the town there are two spots where goddesses Jaya and Vijaya are worshipped. This was one of the stages on the old route to the Cave of Amar Nathji which led across the bridge to Pahalgam. Lately a new bridge had been constructed which shorten the road to Pahalgam. Bijbihara is famous for wood carving and artistic lattice work.

Anantnag

This town is thirty-four miles from Srinagar. The road branches off to the right to a lovely place called Achhabal (Achha-peace, Bal-place). It is said that the garden at the palace was laid out by a Hindu king and remodelled by Mughal

rulers. Water gushes forth from the mountain slope which is covered with conifeous trees. The water is directed into canals and waterfalls to create an exquisite scenic effect. Here is also a trout-culture farm.

Closeby not more than two miles away in Naga Dandi ashram founded by Swamiji (popularly known as Sumbaluk Babaji). It is an excellent place for meditation. Refreshing breezes from the pines laden with fragrance, the cooing of turtle doves, the singing of orioles and thrushes the murmuring of the stream, add to the loveliness of the hermitage. An artificial lake with graceful water plants, the flowers such as Forget me-nots, Cranesbills, Strawberry and various alpine flowers beautify the surroundings.

In this part of the valley there are many charming springs. Anantnag (Islamabad) is a great commerical town. Here is a large spring dedicated to Anant a satellite of Shiv. A fair is held on Anant Choterdashi when some Hindus keep a fast and particularly abstain from salt. Another fair is held when pilgrims to the Amar Nath Cave camp here. Close to the spring a beautiful garden has been laid out by the people. There is a Gurudwara which commemorates the visit of Guru Nanak Dev. There are two important sulphur springs in the town, but they are not kept clean. The water supply of the town is plentiful.

The town is famous for wooden articles, toys and beautifully designed gabba work. The road turns towards left among rice-fields. From Chinars, mulberries and poplars we hear the incessant song of Tickell's Thrush, orioles and doves. The aqueducts are fringed with Balsum, Milfoil and Senecio.

Bawan

This is a famous spring on the way to Pahalgam. It is full of fish. In the intercalary months and on the occassion of particular stellar dispositions in the heavens (Vejay Sapthami) the people from India and Kashmir come here to remember their dead. The spring is called the Martand, spring dedicated to the sun who is believed to be the intermediary through whom good wishes are passed on to the departed relatives.

The Martand temple is situated on the plateau. This temple was built by the famous Lalitaditya who ruled Kashmir from A.D. 601-738.

'On all the ruins in Kashmir the Martand ruins are both the most remarkable and the most characteristic. No temple was ever built on a finer site. It stands on an open plain, where it can be seen to full advantage. Behind it rises a range of snowy mountains. And away in the distance before it, first lies the smiling Kashmir valley, and then the whole length of the Pantisal Range, their snowy summits mingling softly with the azure of the sky. It is one of the most heavenly spots on earth, not too grand to be overpowering, nor too paltry to be lacking in strength, and it is easy to understand the impulse which led a people to raise here a temple to heaven.'

YOUNGHUSBAND

Bumazuv

Near the road is an interesting cave-temple with artistic carvings on the door pillars. There lived Boma Reshi (sage).

AISHIMUKHAM

The Ziarat of Zain Shah Sahib

Perched high up on a mountain spur is the shrine of Zain Shah Sahib known among Hindus as Zanak Rishi. He is the guardian saint of the Lidder valley and is reputed to be one of the followers of Shiekh Noor-Ud-Din the chief saint of the Kashmir valley.

The road now passes along the Shah Kul canal which has been taken out from the Lidder river from Ganishpor to irrigate the Mattan plateau. Here gradually the deciduous trees give place to coniferous ones. Bird-life here presents an interesting variety and laughing thrushes, black bulbuls, warblers, tits and wood-peckers and many more species cross one's path every now and then. Before we enter Pahalgam we see a rock in the stream on the right bank. It is dedicated to god Ganesh the supposed divine gate-keeper of the defile which contains

Pahalgam.

Pahalgam

The hinterland of Pahalgam is in mythological parlance called Shiva Bhumi (the realm of peace). There is no lake, no meadow, no mountain peak which has not been named after a deity. In ancient times probably there existed in this place the hermitage of Bhrigu Rishi (sage). A spring believed to be sacred to this sage can be seen here and the pilgrims to Amar Nath ji are expected to visit it. In course of time a number of hamlets sprang at the site near the bridge. To serve the dwellers in the hamlets a shop-keeper found his way here. These people began to live as shepherds. As this small village stands at the head of the Lidder valley the inhabitants of the lower village sent their flocks and cattle to be looked after by these shepherds who took them to various meadows for grazing. The place occupies a central position in relation to the side valleys crowned by high meadows which the shepherds distributed among themselves. Hence this village came to be named Pahalgam, the village of shepherds.

Recently this place has grown into a famous sanatorium where the people came to escape the sultry heat of the plains and enjoy the blissful breeze of the mountains. The Government has effected considerable improvements in the town. It has a Revenue Officer, a police station, a post and a telegraph office, a dispensary and a Health Officer. There are beautiful bungalows nestling among pines and hotels giving perfect comfort and satisfaction to the visitors. A church, a mosque and a temple are also there for people who seek to steep their souls in peace by communion with God. It is thus that they develop a love for unselfish service to humanity which is true worship.

The Lidder drains Pahalgam and a torrent from the Kolahoi glacier enters it just near Mamal. Flowing majestically among the pines like a fritted sheet of silver murmuring the sonorous song 'Men may come and men may go, but I go on for ever', the stream rushes in a hurry to irrigate the valley below. This is the only charm-a silvery stream- in which Gulmarg lacks.

Modern conditions have turned the place into an active health resort. Rows of shops provide all kinds of amenities for the visitor. There is no dearth of hotels but any one wishing to enjoy tent-life can hire tent equipment from shop-keepers or contractors. Rajwas (place of Rajas) is a plateau on the right bank of the stream covered with pines and this is an ideal camping ground. A bungalow can also be hired by previous arrangement through the Director of Tourism or such arrangements can be made through some hotel-keepers. In fact there is nothing wanting to a person who wishes to enjoy his holidays according to his own choice. The writer places a table and a chair under the shady and fragrance emanating leaves of the pines and fills the pages of the book as his brain is refreshed by breezes from the mountains and flowery meadows. The artist works at his brush and board to draw life-like sketch of natural scenes, of pine groves, old temples, cataracts, cliffs, hamlets of people. The philosopher absorbed in thought on the ways and means of the betterment and unification of humanity. The naturalist finds before him a wide field for research to keep himself busy. He can watch the movements of birds and discover their haunts. Men of all kinds of intellectual and artistic pursuits can find ample material for their purposes. The beauty of this surroundings overshelves the beholder with wonder at this magnificent handiwork of Nature.

While we see Nature in perfect harmony, all peace and perfection, we cannot fail to observe her at her work of destruction which goes on unceasingly. We see wood-peckers beating hard against the bark of trees to take out insects which feed upon trees. We see tree creepers going from trunk to top to eat insects. We see pine needles falling on the earth and huge pines resting flat on the soil rotting and to enable saplings to incarnate. We see huge rocks reduced to sand and soil by the external agents of change on the surface of the earth. We see rushing torrents rolling boulders and stones and engaged in destruction and construction side by side. We watch the trout going after the small fish and dippers diving deep in the rushing flow of the torrent to feast on water-insects, the redstarts

keeping a sharp look-out for stay gnats and darting after them in the air and the sandpipers dashing with open mouth to catch an unfortunate insect. Vultures and kestrals hover about in the air to prey upon rodents, voles and other creatures which they can carry. This aspect of Nature is inseparable from her role as the creative energy for destruction and construction are inter-changable terms. If, in our imagination, we stand in the either outside our solar system we can watch procession in which the stars, planets, star-cities, the earth and the sun rush ceaselessly to complete their circuits, of course, in perfect order in obedience to cosmic law.

Such are Nature's ways, as has been said by Utpala Deva Acharya :

'Pana shana prasadhana
Sambhukta samasta Vishwaya Shivaya
Pralayotsawa sarabhasaya
Dridham upagodham Shivam vanda.'

Translation

'I merge myself in Shiv (peace) whom Shiva (Cosmic energy-Nature) embraces in all her haste, after creating, beautifying, protecting and destroying the universe'.

The Government has appointed energetic officers to improve this famous health resort and year after year new improvements are carried out for the comfort of visitors. As artificiality encroaches on this charming haunt of Nature, its Arcadian simplicity beats a retreat towards Arau, Astan Marg and other far away place where solitude reigns supreme and Nature stands alone in her virgin purity in serene grandeur.

Pahalgam is the nearest health resort to New Delhi from where it can be reached within two or three days. It is an ideal spot where to recoup ones health and to engage one's self in various healthy pastimes. Equipped with a staff and a nailed shoe or chappani, one can go for a mountain climb or to a glade right in the centre of a mountain slope surrounded by pines and fringed by ferns or maiden-hair plants such as, Baisaran, Tulin or Shikargah. It is necessary to carry a good quantity of victuals. Walking sharpens appetite which calls for

substantial nourishment. Water proofs are slippery and care should be taken that one is not carried away towards the deeper parts of the stream where the water flows with irresistible force. Trout fishing is another interesting occupation. Permission should be obtained from Chief Game Warden. Muddy water is harmful to the trout. When the river rises in rains and gets filled with yellow mud many a trout died because of the turbid water.

The islets in the stream are beautifully fitted up with seats. Gay tea parties and lunch dishes are seen every where under the shady pine trees. Some seats project over the waterside to enable the holiday-makers enjoy the refreshing sight of water. There are badminton courts here and there and matches are played between parties previously arranged. Persons interested in bridge are seen busily carrying on the game. The islets are connected with each other by means of bridges and one can cross over from one to the other with ease. The glacial-water like a milky stream circumambulates the islets with its eddying currents. Roads are well kept and cars can easily reach the interior parts of the Rajawas plateau.

The Pahalgam club

The Pahalgam club is run by the Government. The secretary of the club is the Executive officer of the place. It maintains an office which is in the charge of a clerk of the department of Tourism. All enquiries regarding membership should be made from the office.

The club has a superb location. It is situated on an island surrounded by the branches of the Lidder. The rapid torrent with its milky glacial-water forming pools and whirls, encompasses the place with its cool breezes. The cluster of pines and firs which covers the premises casts a refreshing shade and fills the atmosphere with fragrance which enlivens the body and the mind. The island stretches from south to north. There are a number of tanks built for women, children and non-swimmers for bathing purposes. It is dangerous to go out into the torrent, because the flow is rapid, one cannot easily get back to the safety of dry land. For children there are trapezes to ride on. There is a lovely stretch of land attached

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to the club, but the pity is that round about the place acacia is being planted instead of pines. The place should have trees which harmonise with plant life on the surrounding mountains.

There is a few Sunflowers, Zinnias, Crysanthemum and other garden varieties planted round the building. But there is a rich variety of wild flowers for a botanist to study. An expanse of *Mentha sylvestris*, with sweet scent, deep blue *Delphinium* and *Erysimum altaicum*. The club is the centre of activity. The Visitors' Association performs various games to entertain the public. One of their chief functions is the show which is given on the Independence Day (15th August).

In the morning at 9 a.m., the Indian Union Flag is hoisted, lectures and talks are delivered, the purpose of which is to cultivate one's own character, to follow Gandhiji's footsteps, to serve humanity, be unselfish and let India lead world in world peace.

Sweets are distributed among children and then sports are held between the ages from five to under sixty. After 9 p.m., a bon-fire is lit by a group in the disguise of forest dwellers and cosmic dramas are performed on the stage, songs are sung and buffoons create in audience an unbounded jubilation. The sparks from the fire rise higher to kiss the stars in heaven. While, they in their turn shed luster and effulgence from various quarters. In the east a little above the eastern horizon is the Altair the first magnitude star of the Aquila, in the west near the horizon is the Acturus the brightest star of Bootes, in the north lies the Poloris in the middle of Cassopeia and Ursa major, in the south is the twisted tail of Scorpio with two horizontal stars, while on its neck shines the red star Antares. In the centre of the firmament, the Cygnus Lyre, the Corona, and Cepheus are the principal constellations. The Galaxy spans the heaven from north to south.

In the dark forest covered mountians slopes, with red and white electric bulbs shedding light in tents, buildings and hotels, the whole place appears like a star-city.

RAMBLES FROM PAHALGAM

Ganesh Bal

This place is on the right bank of the Lidder and is about a mile from Pahalgam and is dedicated to god Ganesh who is believed to remove all obstacles in one's way when he is worshipped before any undertaking is taken in hand. There is a rock besmeared with red-lead (sindhur) in the stream. The people from the lower villages come here on some occasion to offer sacrifices. There is a tradition that Sikander the Iconoclast intended to go to the cave of Amar Nath to desecrate it. When he arrived there, he smote with his hammer on the Ganesh rock. Out flowed blood. Thereupon he did not venture to proceed to Amar Nath. There is a dharmasala at this place. It is a delightful experience to sit under a tree and watch the foamy flow of the torrent.

Mamal

This spot is also about a mile from Pahalgam. It stands across the Kolahoi stream up towards the mountain side. There is an old temple there the pinnacle of which was adorned with gold during the reign of one of the early kings. There is also a spring beautifully banked with long dressed stones of about 8th century. This was dedicated to Shiva and was called Mamalishwara. It is said that Ganesh was placed as doorkeeper not to allow any one to enter the temple without his permission. So it was called Mam Mal-Dont's go. There is a priest to look after the temple. In summer the place is regularly visited by the populace of Pahalgam.

Baisaran and Tulian

These are two glades in the mountain side surrounded by pines. The going is a bit steep and involves some exertion. Hence sufficient quantities of eatables should be carried to satisfy hunger which acquires a keen edge as a result of the march.

Baisaran (Vaisaran-breeze blowing)

It is about three miles from Pahalgam along the Hospital road. It is a quiet camping ground right in the heart of the Foundation, Chandigarh.

coniferous region vibrant with fragrant breezes on all sides. There is also a spring and a small hill passing through the glade. There is a big rock in the centre of the glade. It is said that saint Zain Shah (Zanak Rishi) meditated 12 years on that stone. There was then living a Gujar with his family. He had a cow from which he gave milk continuously to Zain Shah for 12 years. Once the wife of the Gujar murmured that during 12 years they would have obtained 12 calves from the cow. The saint heard this and called for the Gujar and told him to go to the cowshed and call calves by their names from the door. Thereby 12 calves came out from the shed. When the Gujar was busy with calling the saint left the place. The Gujar searched all sides and found him on the bank of the Lidder at Langan Bal where he crossed it and finally settled at Aishimuqam where his Ziarat is existing.

Tulin

Likewise is a peaceful camping site. It is twelve miles from Pahalgam. There is a mountain tarn.

Shikargah is another interesting glade to visit.

Tsandanwor or Thanin

Tsandanwari or Chhandanwari (Tsandan-pleasure giving coolness, Wari-a farm) is the second stage from Pahalgam on the Amar Nath pilgrimage route. It is eight miles from Pahalgam. There are sheds for pilgrims on the way. It has a nice bridle path and will make a good days ride for an excursion to enjoy the glories of Nature. The path goes along the bank of the torrent with pools and cataracts under the cool coniferous trees refresh the eye and enliven the brain. Here a stream of pure water joins the Sheshi Nag torrent from Astan Marg. Under the trees some of the alpine flowers, the Cran's bill, forget-me-nots, Myosotis, Asters and various kinds of flowers are to be found in the vegetation.

The old name of the place is Thanin which is a corruption of Thaninshwar an aspect of Mahadiv. Here are a few Gujar sheds and now and then one comes across a snow bridge spanning the torrent. Here is a tourists hut.

Astanmarg

Pahalgam to Tsandanwari-seven miles, Tsandanwari to Astanmarg-four miles. The word Astan is the corrupt form of styan which means frozen-marg, a meadow. In times gone by when the slopes of mountains were covered with glaciers their gradual and slow movement scooped out this valley and the avalanches cleared trees from the place leaving a plain altogether bereft of trees. Here shepherds find green pasturage for their cattle and flocks.

This is the where Arcadian simplicity unveils hereself in her primeval bloom. The trees, mountains, streams and the feathered world deepens the all pervasive solitude. Stealthily flows the slow, smooth stream as if taking care not to disturb the tranquillity of Nature. It rises from various springs and contains no glacial water carrying sand-particles flowing from mountian flanks. The valley is bounded on the west by Rabi Marg which is a watershed between Astan Marg and Harbagwan Nag on the east by Gob Dalan which is the watershed between Astan Marg and Sheshi Nag. Wood is available and birch trees are in plenty. The folds in mountains are very conspicuous and summits are like serrated edges forming fantastic shapes to beguile the imaginative on-looker.

The Sasokot, slope, over which a path goes to the Amar Nath Cave is covered with gravel, sand and scree, hence during bad weather this pass is very difficult. Consequently the Kashmir Government has banned this route for pilgrims. At the foot of the pass there are flower beds of Edellwesis, Dandelion and Geranium growing among stones. A little higher Corydalis falconeri grows side by side with these flowers while Euphorbia and Iris cover the higher slopes. Still higher Rhododendron and creeping willow cover the slope below the naked peak. the Oxallis digyna, yellow and pink Corydalis and Saxifage show themselves near the top where the pack ponies can make their way with difficulty. All peaks round about have been reduced to pebbles and sand owing to insolation and weathering and heaps of small stones are seen everywhere.

This is an excellent camping ground where fatigue, boredom and mental worry vanish effortlessly. It is a spot for philosophers, writers and saints. All nature is astir during the day and at night the moon and star constellations send their ray through pines needles to embrace the beauty of the place. The reflection of the full moon in the clear depths of the stream creates the illusion of a shining pearl glowing in the abysmal deep. Such is Astan Marg, the home of peace, serenity and sublimity, the restorer of health and vitality.

Arau

Arau is seven miles from Pahalgam. The path is a ponytrack. On either side of the path Blasam and Stacys grow in abundance. The maiden-hair and ferns hide themselves in shady nooks behind the rocks. Viburnum nervosum and witch hazel grow under pines. Dodder, a parasite grows on the former and feeds on it. Menthasylvestris a fragrant herb is also common.

The path sometimes leaves the stream and sometimes follows it. Watching its flow will yield ample recompense in the sight of the beautiful torrent. Birds such as redstart, whistling thrushes, grosbeaks and yellow-headed wagtails are also observed.

Arau is a hamlet of about a dozen huts exclusively made of unhewn planks with very little iron used in them. They are huddled together as a safeguard against the severity of winter, a few willows grow round the huts and a few maize and potato fields surround the village. The fields are encircled by fences made of the branches of trees on which meadow huntings sit to watch their prey.

The word Arau means a sound, the mountain torrent which flows down out of the Katri Nag over the Danawat mountains produces noises which probably gave the place its name. It is a rolling meadow of velvety green turf, fringed with fir and pines on which in summer tits, wood-peckers, turtle-dove and nutthach find their food, and emit melodious song. It is worth while to explore the surroundings of this place and for that may lead to the discovery of the remains of an ancient temple hereabout. It is a quiet camping ground enveloped in solitude.

Here is a hut for tourists.

Tar Sar and Kolahoi Glacier

The most suitable site for camping in Lidderwat is 8,952 ft. above sea level. It is seven miles from Arau and lies at the junction of several routes. Here is also a tourist hut. The stream from Far Sar joins here. The path at times skirts the stream and at times leave it to go up a few hundred feet above over the densely forested plateau. Slowly the coniferous belt change into the birch and meadow region. The shade of trees gets more and more scarce and hence it is better to start early.

Arrangements for this trek should be made from Pahalgam. All camp equipment can be hired from certain agencies and warm bedding and clothing should be necessarily brought over. Pack ponies and riding ponies can be obtained from contractors. It is necessary to have an axe for cutting wood and a spade for digging a trench round the tent as soon as it is pitched. A staff, several grass sandals and boots with nails are essential. Grass sandals are best to walk over rocks and snow. Lighting arrangements should be carefully attended to. Cinnamon should be freely used in tea and some good stimulants kept at hand. The camping site should not become a pool when it rains, the slope should keep it always dry.

The path passes through the boulders round which dock grows in profusion. On some islets in the torrent there are a very many specimen of alpine flowers. A couple of logs or a bridge over the stream and when it is in flood it always sweeps away this bridge. Care should be taken when loaded pack ponies cross the bridge, the scenery is wild precipitous mountain slopes rise on both sides of the valley which is strewn over with boulders among which alpine flowers peep out most magnificently. Occassionally a grove of birch trees may be seen growing in some shady places or in the joints where two stratas meet. Before we enter the Kolahoi valley a torrent from the Sona Sar lake which lies at the foot of Basmai Galli 3,885 ft. flows over a precipice and is divided into a number of distributaries before it falls into the Lidder. These

are called Satalnjan (seven branches) which also means streams or koloha and this might be the origin of the name of Kolahoi.

The valley spreads out bounded by the high mountainous devoid of coniferous trees but covered more or less with birch and Juniper bushes. A number of Gujar sheds can be seen here. These are occupied for two summer months by the Gujars who come with cattle to live here. There are also shepherds with their flock. The valley is well covered with *Senecio chrysanthemoides* and dock which is a potherb when it is young. There are a number of islets which contain clusters of *Corydalis thrysiflora* and *Erysimum altaicum* and *caltha palustris*. On the east of the valley over the precipice a torrent flows in silvery sheets to join the main stream in the valley. It rises from the Dudh Nag (milk spring) which is fed by glaciers and lies on a plateau. It is circular in shape. The whole slope is beautifully covered with alpine flowers. From here one can have a charming view of the Kolahoi glacier with its crevasses and boulders and glistening surface. The rumbling noise of water rushing underneath the glacier can be heard from here. A walk to the snout of the glacier is a delightful experience. The lower part of this icy valley is covered with debris and moraines so much so that no trace of ice can be seen. The thickness of the ice is at least 200 ft. and its flow must be 4 to 6 inches in 24 hours. The glacier scratches rocks and scoops lakes while at the same time it is constantly receding. It is possible that it will in course of time retain its mountain flank only.

It is very interesting to walk over the glacier for some yards. Care should be taken that there are no crevasses. If the snow at any point looks yellow or loose a crevasse must be underneath. An ice-axe is an important item of equipment. In going over a glacier covered with crevasses it is necessary that the party should tie a long rope round their loins so that if by chance some one falls into a crevasse, he will not sink deep into the fissure. Sometimes planks are used to cross a crevasse and sometimes one has to take a zigzag course or to jump over the crevasse where it is narrow.

The other extremity of this glacier is towards the Harbhagwan valley, where it has a frowning aspect and is full of dangerous crevasses. It must be about six miles long. These fields of ice are perennial sources of water supply on which the prosperity of our country depends. The Himalayas are skirted by many glorious glaciers which are extended to very low levels, but now owing to changed climatic conditions are retreating to their mountain origins. It is possible to find here a stone with fossil impression of the *fenestella* type. For there is a strata of *fenestella* in the western mountain system which was discovered in 1925.

The bold peak of Gwashi Bror (Kolahoi) 17,779 ft. rises 6,000 ft. above the surrounding mighty peaks of the valley. It can be observed from Gulmarg and other high plateaus of the Kashmir valley like cone of crystal kissing the sapphire cheek of the heavens. These magnificent peaks wrapped in haze and lending perpetual glory to Kashmir are symbols of peace, disinterested service and firmness.

'A look at the mountain peaks is a perpetual delight. They are an emblem of purity, dignity and repose. They strike one as a vision of soft pure white in a gaze-like haze of delicate blue, too light and too ethereal for earth, but seemingly a part of heaven; a vision which is a religion in itself, which diffuses its beauty throughout one's being, and evokes from it all that is most pure and lovely.'

Selecting a suitable spot for lunch right in Nature's blossom, catching a breath of everlasting happiness, one would observe a white-breasted diper sitting on the rock in the stream, moving its body up and down or diving in the steam, a yellow-headed wagtail or a whiter-capped redstart searching after its food near the stream, or a pair of snow-pigeons or swifts coming out of rocks and flying past the ledge. On the mountain slope a brick-red kestrel would be balancing on its wings to scan the ground for a vole or mice for its meal, or a swarm of kites, vultures, lammergeiers may be found feasting themselves over a dead sheep.

It is always advisable to arrive at the camp early, because

late arrivals causes anxiety in the camp and walking over stones and boulders without a light is not a pleasant experience. A march to the camp at Lidderwat covers 13 miles. A good dinner would remove all fatigue and ensure sound sleep for the night. The dawn would greet you with the melodious symphony of whistling thrushes and grey-head thrushes from the adjoining area round the tent. The cooing of the turtle-dove and the croaking of the jungle crow would assail the ears again and again. Even occasional hoots of the wood-owl would be heard. If time is not consideration, it is worth-while staying for the day and survey the bird-life or plant-life round the place.

Tar Sar

Lidderwat Tar Sar-ten miles. Leaving Lidderwat we pass slopes covered with rose bushes, Geums Potentillas. Sometimes it is possible to cross a snow-bridge near Hamwas. There are few Gujar Chalets here. A clear view of Kolahoi peak can be had from here. A little higher up a stream from Sekiwas (sandy place) joins the stream from Tar Sar. Sekiwas is an open valley. It is strewn over with boulders. The vegetation is luxuriant. The Phlomis, the Salviahians, blue Corydalis and many different varieties of alpine flowers are found here. This is also a junction of several routes. One on the right, passes over Yemher pass 13,400 ft. staircase of the Angel of Death-via Zaiwan on to Kulan on the Zojila road. The middle path passes along the over shallow lake of Tsanda Sar over sonamus on to Sumbal on the Zojila road. While the left one winds along TAR SAR via Dachgam valley to Shalimar (Srinagar). The last route is not opened to public.

Tar Sar lies among mountains open from one side. It is shaped like an almond. It is not awe-inspiring like Konsar Nag. The shores are low and form an excellent camping ground. The mountains are not high but are devoid of trees. They are covered with herbal vegetation and water is transparent and very sweet. This is a calm and quiet place. The appetite is apt to acquire a sharp edge here. There is no fuel available. To prepare tea one should bring some fuel along with him. It is

worthwhile to bathe in the lake, but one should not venture into its deeper parts unless one is a strong swimmer and can resist cold. One is enveloped by Nature and she permeates the whole of his being-physical as well as mental. When the wind ruffles the surface of water a little, the crests of wavelets catching the suns rays turn the water into a sheet of sparkling diamonds. In such sublime moments man's little self merges into the Universal Soul which pervades the universe and is the life of all things.

Near the western shore of the lake there are two islets and a deep inlet where sometimes icebergs can be seen floating. Many legends and folk-tales are associated with this lake. The southern slope is more or less precipitous. On the eastern shore Potentillas are in profusion. A climb up the Tar Sar pass which is the demarcation line of Dachigam Rakh reveals another beautiful Lake Mar Sar (cupid Lake) the waters of which drain the Rukh skirting the base of mount Mahadiv empties itself into the Srinagar Reservoir.

The meadow round about the lake is an excellent pasturage. Where shepherds bring their flocks. They have a great veneration for the lake and offer a sacrifice on their first arrival and departure. In 1925 when we visited this lake, the following conversation took place between the shepherd who lived here and myself.

Shepherd : 'You should not bathe in this sacred lake, saints only can do so'.

Myself : 'How long have you been coming here ?'

Shepherd : 'My grandfather and my father also used to come here and I have been coming with my flocks for forty years'.

Myself : 'Have you ever felt the presence of the Great Power in this sacred place ?'

Shepherd : 'What a simpleton you are ! Listen, sir, people entrust their flocks to me and sometimes I sell a lamb for Rs. 2 or Re 1- 8-0 and insist on my customer returning to me the skin and the head of the animal so that I can show them to

the owners and can tell them that the lamb was eaten by a panther or a wild beast. Do you think that with such a sinful mind I shall ever be able to feel the presence of the Supreme Power ?'

Ten years later we launched a rubber canoe in the lake and surveyed every nook and corner of it. Bird-life in this region is not plentiful. Several flocks of red-billed choughs and dome griffin vultures sailing round about the craggy peaks may be observed. Return by the same route to the camp at Lidderwat, one can have some rest and, if possible, stay a day longer if one be not in a hurry to move down to Pahalgam or Srinagar.

Har Bhagwan Lake

This is one of the most exciting treks which could last at least for a week. One should be equipped with tents and every essential for ones comfort etc.-warm clothing, grass sandals, thermos, binoculars (if possible) and a camera. There are three stages :

Pahalagam to Arau	...	7 miles
Arau to Armin	...	7 miles
Armin to Har Bahgwan Nag	...	5 miles

The whole path is a pony track. The path from Pahalgam to Arau is a lovely walk along a river among conifer which nurse small bird-life and the undergrowth consists of beautiful Geranium, Gentians and Forget-me-nots.

The path from Arau runs under huge shady fir trees. Here one can find edible mushrooms under the trees. Arisaema tortuosum (the top of this plant is like the head of a snake) and Podyphyllum emodi, with its red fruit, Oxyria digyna, a potherb grow round the rocks. Several varieties of them are found and after one crosses the bridge near Girwad clusters of blue poppies are found growing among the rocks.

Gagri Pather is a flat spot where the morning meal should be prepared or lunch served. Among the vegetables found here, mushrooms and Oxyria digyna cooked together make a

good dish. In the centre of this spot is a big rock on th top of which various alpine flowers grow. I do not like to burden the mind of the trekker with their names. Let him observe and see for himself and consult. Towards the right bank of the stream is a small fall. Slaty-blue fly-catchers, pied-woodpeckers and jungle crows can be observed here.

Further away the slopes are covered with wild dock, Jacob's ladder, *Senecio*, *Cynoglossum*, *Swertia* and *Verbasium thapsus*. White-capped redstarts and plumbeous redstarts might be seen on some rock in the torrent.

Armin (Armini-beauty all round) is a flat spot and good camping ground. It is covered with *Senecio chrysanthemoides* which along with dock is generally found between 9,000 ft. to 10,000 ft. above the sea level. A stream flows from the north-east by the side of the valley. The northern aspect of the mountains is covered with fir and birch while the southern aspect owing to insolation and weathering is rocky and precipitous. Here one finds some Gujar families from whom milk, butter and milk-cakes can be purchased. There are also a few springs here. Spring water is clearer than glacial water and should be used preferably for drinking purposes. Grey wagtails and whistling thrushes can be observed. Brown dippers are to be seen sitting on boulders raising and lowering their bodies. It is interesting to see how they dive after an insect in a rushing torrent. There flight is straight, almost touching the water, while wagtail, fly in curves. Flocks of yellow-billed choughs may be observed flying over the slope.

An ascent of 300 ft. leads on a flat spot called Arm Pathri. The Floral vegetation on all sides is magnificent. Near the lower Nafaran there is a beautiful fall. There are also some Gujar Sheds. The upper Nafaran is a fairly large valley where no fuel is obtainable. The mountain flanks and some snow-beds give rise to the Armin stream, which joins the Lidder at Arau.

The Har Bhagwan Ghatti (12,729 ft.) leads to the Har Bhagwan valley. The slope of the pass is covered with slate, shale and scree. Among the slate we found *Corydalis govaniana*

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and *Corydalis crossifolia* with three fan-shaped thick leaves and purple flowers. The last lap of the pass is a series of steps where pack ponies have to be unloaded. The view from the pass is superb. Right at the foot of the pass is the turquoise-green Har Nag (the lake of peace) shining like a glittering eye at the head of an emerald green body. A part of the lake is silted up. Towards the N.E. are the snowy peaks of Baltal with glaciers interspersed among them. On the right is the Har Bhagwan peak 16,041 ft. and on the left is Kolahoi surrounded by glaciers. On the top of the pass *Potentilla* plants are to be found.

The slopes of Har Nag (12,269 ft.) are steep, covered with *Geum* and Red *Potentilla*. There is a pony track up these slopes, but in bad weather it becomes very slippery and dangerous.

There is a legend connected with the spring. Har Nag sent his son and daughter-in-law to find a spot where he could live near Kolahoi (Gwashi-bror). They went back and told him that there was room for them but none for him. He then sent his son-in-law, who returned with the news that there was room for his father-in-law but not for himself. So he cursed and petrified his son and daughter-in-law and made room for his son-in-law at his feet. The two rocks towards the silted part of the lake are the petrified son and daughter-in-law while the lakelet at the bottom is the son-in-law.

Here one meets shepherds with their flocks. On the first day of their arrival, they kill a sheep and cook their food in well-washed utensils. Before they eat, they place a dish full of cooked rice and meat on the shore of the lake as an offering to the spring deity.

There is a nice camping ground here. The spot selected for the tent should however be such that rain water naturally flows away from it. The first and foremost duty of the camp manager is to dig a trench round the tent and perpare tea.

The north of a place can be found by observing the position of Druv Ji (Pole Star) in the firmament. It occupies the middle position between the constellations of Sapta Rishi (the

Great Bear) and Cassopiea. A line joining the two stars of the Great Bear called pointers passes through the Pole Star, or if the angle is cassopia (lady's chair) in the form of W is trisected will also pass through it. It will add pleasure if other constellation be also located.

The valley is full of marmots' burrows. These animals are as large as a big cat and brown in colour. They have been found living above 9,000 ft. in dreary regions. When they hoot at intruders they stand on their hind legs and join their fore legs in the manner of a Kangaroo or a penguin. They are sometimes killed for their furs. The burrows are formed of Zigzag passages. A copper-coloured lizard is also found at a similar height. The naked-peaks are the haunts of the ibex and the stag, which descend to lower levels in winter and early spring. Brown bears are also sometimes found here.

The valley is inhabited by shepherds, Gujars and Bakorbans. On Fridays the Gujars make milk cakes from bufaloes' milk. The milk is boiled and some churned milk is put into it till it turns sour. It is then strained and cakes are made from the residue. Cakes are also made from churned milk, but they are thicker and not so good. The cakes are fried in oil or ghee and eaten.

It is worth-while surveying the valley. The Western end the Kolahoi glacier gives rise to a torrent which drains the whole of the Har Bhagwan Valley and enters the Amar Nath stream (Pantsatarni) at Baltal. It is worth-while to climb up the edge of the glacier made through the torrent and have a glimpse of the flowing crevasses of the glacier. The ice has turned pink and blue and it seems that the water too is of pink colour. It may be that the rocks contain some pink stuff which colours the water. No attempt should be made to negotiate the glacier itself, because its fissures are deep and slippery. It is possible to go over his pass to the Kolahoi valley but it is not a pony track.

There must have been a time when this glacier extended right into the valley and joined the other glacier from the adjoining mountains. Against the valley and scooped out the Lake.

But now it has receded and skirt the Kolahoi mountain which is popularly called Gawashi Bror (the goddess of light) because it catches the rays of the sun first in the morning. There are no trees here except a few juniper bushes.

This valley is the meeting place of several routes. One, which is not a pony track, goes along the Har Bhagwan Galli (14,086 ft.). At Rabi Marg there is a lake on the way where, according to the story of a shepherd, one may meet fairies and hear them singing and if a person gets enamoured of them he loses his life. At the foot of the pass lies Astan Marg. The other route which goes along Razdon Pass (13,200 ft.) is longer but miles from the Cave of Amar Nath.

Baltal is fifteen miles from here and Sona Marg which is at a distance of ten miles from Baltal is connected by a motorable road with Srinagar.

A Visit to the Cave of Amar Nath

The Cave of Amar Nath is about twenty-nine miles from Pahalgam. The famous pilgrimage to the cave takes place on Sawan purnamasi (July-August full moon). The congregation of pilgrims starts from Pahalgam on Duwadashi shkula pak (twelfth day of the bright fortnight). The route is marked by three stages.

Pahalgam to Tsandanwari eight and half miles.

Tsandanwari to Vaovajen eight miles.

Ascent to Pisu Hill (11,081 ft.) pony track.

No fuel except juniper is available during this part of the journey which is marked by a superb view of Shishiram Nag. There are some sheds for Sadhus en route.

Vaovajen to Pantasatarni eight and quarter miles.

Pantasatarni to Cave four miles.

On the return journey too some sheds of Sadhus are met with. On other days weather permitting, this journey can be performed in two days. A person starting early on horse-back will spend the night at Vaovajen. Early next morning he will visit the Cave and return to Pahalgam in the evening. There may possibly be a seasonal hotel at Vaovajen.

One march nearing the end of the valley which leads us back towards Baramulla gives us a splendid view of Haramuk's rough old head. His coiffure is less snowy in the autumn for hot sunshine during several months has clipped his white locks close; still, at whatever time and from whatever place his seen, it is a fine old mountain, and any valley is the richer for a sight of him.

(1915)

3

The Wular Lake

The Wular lake is the largest fresh water lake in India. It is about 13 miles long and 6 miles broad, covering an area of about 78 sq. It is encircled by the high mountains on the north and north-east of the valley. The rivers Bohnar, Madamati and Erin from the mountin ranges and the Vatasta (Jhelum) and the Ningal from the south bring hundreds of tons of silt into the lake year after year.

The word Wular comes from a Sanskrit word 'Ullola' which means stormy, high rising waves. The origin may also be attributed to a Kashmiri word 'Wul' which means a gap or a fissure.

There are a number of traditions connected with the lake. About 26 centuries before the Christian Era, Raja Sandiman of Kashmir founded a city on both the sides of the Vatasta at the foot of the northern mountain ranges in Khoyi Hama. He built here spacious and grand buildings, tall and graceful temples furnished with golden and silver images. This city was called Sankimat Nagar. The same king built the temple at Shankara-charia Hill.

About 544 years later in the reign of Sunder Sen, this place became a den of immorality. The people forgot God. Day and night they wallowed in wine and debauchery, worshipping

mammon and woman. The king sided with profligate persons. When such conditions reached a climax, a potter of this city named Nand Gupt of low caste, a man whom the people hated because of his piety, was inspired and preached against the sinful ways of the people. They mocked and laughed at him. Where wealth accumulates, men decay. According to the local tradition, the potter was inspired in a dream that he should tell all the citizens to leave the town, and he with his family should climb the hill, but not look back till he reached the top. Next day he did this. With his potter's wheel on his back he climbed the hill. When he reached the middle of the way he cast a look at the city but found no change. When he reached the top, the earth shook, a fissure appeared in the earth, water gushed forth and swamped the whole city. Near Baramulla at Khadaniyar a part of the mountain tumbled down and blocked the flow of the river Jhelum. This caused a flood to deluge the valley. He found half of his potter's wheel turned into gold. The hillock, on the top of which is the shrine of Baba Shukur Din, is still called Krala Sangor (potter's hillock). It is said that the ruins of the ancient city are to be seen when the water is very low. This is not unlike the story of Sodom and Gomorrah.

One of the ancient names of the lake was Maha Padma Saras. Maha Padma, a serpent-gold, a satellite of Shiva is believed to be the patron saint of the lake. It is said that in the reign of Jayapid (753-784 A.D.) a Dravidian sorcerer intended to exercise Maha Padma from here in order to water some arid region in the plains. Jayapid in a dream beheld an apparition of Maha Padma who besought him to save him from this sorcerer and promised to show him a mountain of raw gold. In the morning the king made enquiries and found out this sorcerer. "How can you dry this lake which has an average depth of feet", the king asked.

Your Majesty, I shall show on the spot', said the sorcerer. They both went to the shore of the lake and the sorcerer, by darting arrows in different directions dried the lake. The king saw Maha Padma and family in a form half human and half snake, struggling for life in the mire. The king ordered the

sorcerer to fill the lake again and dissuaded him from taking away the serpent. The snake appeared again in a dream to the king and said "Your Majesty had exposed my family; I shall not show you raw gold but a raw-copper mine from which can be made one million coins". There is another version of the story. The sorcerer engaged a boat and told the boatman to take the boat near the spring. He kept a candle burning in the boat, on the burning of which his safety rested. The sorcerer dived into the lake and brought up the big snake Maha Padma, and drew a circle of lime round the sopt where he placed the snake. He dived again in order to bring up his family. The snake in the boat entreated the boatman to extinguish the candle and rub out this circle of lime, and promised him gold in exchange for this good turn. The boatman was moved by this speeh and did as requested. The serpent, being free, jumped into the lake and killed the sorcerer who was about to move his family. The boatman did not see any gold, but saw charcoal floating on water. He was disgusted, and collected some charcoal in his Kangri. Next day he saw all the charcoal turned into gold. He expressed sorrow, born of avarice for not collecting more.

This lake is a charming recreation ground. During the past 60 years it has ben the Chief Easter Camp of the masters and boys of the Biscoe schools. Their flotilla has consisted of House-boats, doongas, Shikaras, a 12 oar'd cutter, and sailing boats. They have churned the waters of every bay and gulf, climbed every peak and meadow, visited every spring and interesting spot, taken with them lunch and tea, rowed and sailed day and night whenever occasion arose. When returning from an expedition in a pitch dark night in their sailing boat, the inmates of the camp would reveal their position by hoisting a light on a long pole or keep a fire burning on the beach lof the lake. In one such expedition the lake became dangerously rough, a row-lock got loose and fell into water, and flowed down to Sopor. Rumours were afloat, and some were even telegraphed to Srinagar that some Biscoe school masters were drowned. Their relatives and officials hastened to the sopt to see the dead, but to their intense surprise, they met a smiling

group alive and well, Many such unique outings have taken place. I recollect an occasion when my friend and I were in the sailing tub, the Artemis at 3 a.m. The moon and the star constellations shedding full light, the breeze driving us towards the island, every conceivable animal life in perfect repose, the mountains shrouded in a dark mantle, the reflection of celestial orbs in the lake most soothing, we sailed as in a dream world till the light of the dawn from the east beckoned us to move towards the coast. Such moments of unearthly calm only angels can share.

Thus the people living on the shores of the lake have been encouraged to shake off all superstitions and fears and warmly welcome the lake as their friend. At times the lake is very dangerous, especially when the wind blows down from Nagamarg and with a sudden gust of wind from above swamps and sinks a boat. This wind is called Naga Knon, a violent and sudden squall. The wind blowing down the Erin and the Madumati Valleys and that from Baramulla called Vij, and gusts from the direction of Srinagar ruffle the calm surface of the lake turning it into rough rude sea. This generally takes place in the afternoon, hence boats usually cross the lake before noon. It would be a good move if the Government built a police post near Ajas promontory-which we christened Green Nose-fully equipped with binoculars and life saving devices so as to be always ready to rescue any boat in danger. Many lives have been lost in the past in rough weather without any help to save them.

To spend one's holiday leisurely on the shores of the lake, one should hire either a house-boat or a doonga and also arrange for a sailing boat to cruise in the lake, if possible. It is a distance of about 46 miles from Srinagar to Banayari, the entrance to the Wular. There are many camping place en route, but the boat should not be exposed to wind. The journey may be broken either at Shadipor or Sumbal.* Shadipor is about 14 miles by river from Srinagar and about 9 miles from Ganderbal. Sumbal is about 6 miles from Shadipor. Next day in the after noon the boat will be at Banayari the mouth of the Jhelum where it enters the lake. In April the area round

the banks of the river and deltic region of the lake is beautifully covered with yellow rapeseed blossom and skylarks are seen soaring and singing in the heavens. Cries of fish-eagles can sometimes be heard.

There are three excellent mooring place; (a) Ningal, (b) Kiunus Bay (c) Ajus spur. As the lake is silted up by the rivers and rain erosion, canals have been dug to get boats to the shore. Some times difficulty is experienced in finding these canals, but boatmen are expert pilots, and can be relied upon to find a way.

(a) Ningal Nallah

Ningal is three miles from Sopor, which is the chief town on the Wular towards the southeast. Many a cruise in a sailing boat or in a shikara can be arranged. Here also is Mahseer found. The willow trees harbour starlings, thrushes golden orioles, and common birds, e.g., mynas and sparrows, snipes and flocks of black-headed gulls may be seen skimming over the water. Once a mulberry tree was full of scarlet minivets on thier vernal migration, that it could have been taken for the flame of the forest.

(b) Kiunus Bay

The Kiunus valley lies under the shadow of Baba Shukur-ud-Din's Ziarat which is on the top of Kirala Sangor Hill. It is 13 miles from Sopor and about 8 miles from Bandipur. The Zainagar canal which is drawn from the Madmati at Khayar opposite Sonarwon is about 25 miles long and water this village. The lower slop of the mountain is covered with thorny bushes where white-throuats, White-capped Buntings, Bushchats and Bee eaters make their nests. Higher above among pebbles and shingly surface, 'Chukors and Blue Rock-thrushes build their nests.

Baba Shukur-ud-Din is the guardian Saint of the lake. His shrine is on the sumit of the hill. There is a Ziarat and acommodation for priests. They store water in large earthen vessels covered with birch bark to keep it cool. In early March the whole place is beautifully covered with Crown imperials. It

commands a glorious view of the lake.

Lolab Valley

There is a bridle path from Kiunus to Lalpor (Lolab). On the way there are two lovely villages* nestling among pines before one reaches the top of the Rampur hill, which is 5 miles distant. It is about 8 miles from this place to Lalpor (Lolab). Divor is a good camping ground with two springs en route. There is another path from Olus which is three miles away. From Olus to the Sharifsoan at the top of the hill is about 8 miles. Thence 2 miles to Lalpore (Lolab). Lolab is a magnificent forest area covered with deodar trees. They stretch low down into the plain. Villages are shaded with apple, pear and walnut trees. Monkeys are found in large numbers on the forest trees. The Tree Creepers, the Crested-Black Tit, Yellow billed Magpie, Pied Woodpecker, Sooty Flycatcher and slaty-headed Parakeets also house themselves on these trees.

The Bungas Valley

In the northern mountain region of the Kashmir valley, to the west of Lolab Valley, there is a lovely extensive meadow called Bungas, a rich pasturage, about 9,500 ft. above sea-level.

It is about 22 miles from Langet and 71 miles from Srinagar. From Langet a jeep track for 14 miles runs to Putwari and from there a pony-track of 8 miles goes through fir and deodar forests to Bungus. There is a short track from Handawara to Wadar about 12 miles and a pony track of about 4 miles from Wadar village. At present Langet is the nearest Bus stop.

If well developed, it well be next Gulmarg. It is a famous nai (meadow) where shepherds take villagers' sheep, goats and cattle for summer months to rear. The gujars go there with their buffaloes. This beautiful spot is worthy of developing. Tourists huts, rest houses can be gracefully erected. At such places, where the artificial civilisation has not yet invaded, the tourist should carry with him all equipment and hoarding arrangements. One may pitch a tent in the open under a coniferous tree and enjoy Nature.

There is a stream, the Tilwan Kol draining these heavenly meadows. There are a number of springs. There is a charming tarn Satkol Sar about which people have a great superstition. A party of officials had been there to find out the possibility of irrigating the Rajowar area from the waters of this place. A relative of mine told me that a man felt pain in his stomach, it was referred to the doctor and in a mysterious way the man disappeared. It happened near Satkol Sar which according to their belief is haunted by Fairies.

The vegetation is luxuriant. The wild flowers are in profusion. The herbs are in abundance. *Sassurea sacra*, *Sassurea lappa*, *Atopia bullodone* and many other useful plants are to be found.

From Bungas there is a sacred lake dedicated to Shankar (Shiva) on the top of a mountain called Koj Nag 13,000 ft, about 17 miles. There are also stag bear and other game animals.

Nagamarg

There is a lovely meadow about 10,000 ft. above sea-level.

Spring in the Wular Lake

Not very far from Watalab point, water bubbles up from the bottom of the lake. There is another spring somewhere near the middle, where water bubbles up likewise. the Hindus offer sugar candy and rice and Mohammedans also make some kind of offering before entering the lake. Friday is supposed to be unlucky for crossing the lake.

Zimmanz is the deepest part of the lake. The current flows towards it. All corpses accumulate here, hence it is called Mota Khon (the gulf of corpses). There is a rest house on the bank commanding a charming view.

The Sodurkot spur

This spur which we have named Green Nose, lies between Sodurkot and Gurur village on the Srinagar-Bandipor motor road. The advantage of this mooring post over others is that there is a flat piece of ground near the shore and a level spot

on the spur which commands one of the finest views of the lake. There are also remains of an ancient fort on it. the place is about 6 miles from Bandipur with its post and telegraph office, police station and dispensary.

Sulphur Spring

About 4 miles from Green Nose is a sulphur spring. It is believed to cure some skin diseases. On either side of the general road there are wild pomegranate trees which yield anardon used for making sauce and sour vegetable preparations.

Temple at Gurur

There is a spring dedicated to goddess Gauri at Gurur about two miles from here. There is an ancient temple at one corner of this spring. It is said that there were four temples standing at four corners of this spring. But the stones of these temples have been removed in order to build the temple on the island in the lake. The Pandits living in the vicinity believe it to be good for their health if they bathe here before sunrise on Sundays. It is a pleasant picnic spot.

Spring at Nodhal

About four miles from Green Nose is a spring just near the road. There are some images carved out of some rocks evidently showing some signs of an ancient sacred spot. There is a beautiful mountain spur to climb to the pines.

Erin Valley

The charming valley starts from Nodhal and leads up to two lovely high altitude lakes. The journey would require at least four days.

Madumati Valley

Following the course of the Madumati river for some miles there are some beautiful small waterfalls, about 11 miles from the camp.

Island

It is said that this island in the Wular Lake was made by the good king Zain-ul-abidin (1423-1474). He built it to serve

as a beacon of safety for boatmen in stormy weather. It was then in the middle of the Lake, but it is now towards one side and when water is low one can wade to it. During these years the lake has been silted up by the river. There is a temple towards the north eastern corner of the island and a part of the temple is sunk down. There is a lingam of the temple in the water. It is said that the stones from the Gurur temples have been utilised in building the edifice on this island. It is a delightful picnic spot.

Cave of Dhanishawar

About ten miles up the Erin Valley is the cave of Dhanishawar. There is a very narrow passage leading into the cave. It is necessary to carry a light. From the roof of the cave, water drips on the lingam. There is a chamber inside which would hardly contain about seven persons. It is sacred to the Hindus and is visited when the moon is full.

Villages round the Lake

At Ajus there is a stone quarry where stones are dressed. Tomb-stones, stone mortars, and other things of stone are made. The woods round about contain witch-hazel, so at Ajus, Gurur and Sudorkot baskets of wicker-work are made and exported to other towns. During winter wild animals such as the bear, monals, and antelopes come lower down. Bee-keeping is also practised.

Towards the northern shore fish are dried. They have two methods: one is to dry the fish along with the viscera and the fish so treated being called raza hogada (rope dry fish) and the other is to take out the viscera and dry the fish, this is called khanda hogada (sugear dry fish). They are exported to the city.

Singara (water chesnut) is the great product of this place. It is a state monopoly. The government lets it out on contract. There was a time when it was the staple food of the villagers living round the lake. It is of five different kinds. There is an interesting method of collecting singars by these workmen.

During winter months the wild fowl are found in large numbers. There are several reserves where wild ducks are not shot without permission. The birds migrate from northern region to spend their winter here. The Coot, the Lapwing, the Sand piper, the Red Shank, the Snipe, the Gull, the Cormorant. A big black bird with beak like cormorant, probably the Shag, the Goose, the Brahmany duck, the Mallard, the Gadwall, the Wigeon, the Teal, the Pintail, the Shoveller, the Pochard the Gooseander and the Grebe are all found here. A sportman has to get permission from the Game Department if he wishes to shoot.

4

Chinar in Kashmir

Chinar is called Booin by us and the word is Bhawani in Sanskrit which has become sorrupt and is Booin that is a blessing Mata (Mother). Booin (Chinar) is a blessing mother considered by the inhabitants of Kashmir. Its shadow keeps us cool during summer months and its sight is pleasing to the eyes. It protects us during torrential rains. Its Botanical term is 'Platanus Orientals (Plain). Its leaves and branches shine during summer months. The Chinar is classed number one tree and is a royal tree. Its felling is strictly prohibited by the State Govt. It grows at a height of 4000 to 6000 feet above sea level. It requires cool and warm climate and the soil alluvial. When winter sets in, its dried leaves are turned into charcoal and used in Kangris (fire-posts) which keeps us warm and for us is a defence against winter. Its account is given in Raja Tarangni, "as old trees in whose hollow is fire". I believe it, this allusion to chinar because chinar when it is old gets hollow and ignites spontaneously. A through research is required in this connection.

Laleshwari or Lalded, a poetess saint of Kashmir during early 14th Century AD has mentioned of Chinar:

"Kainchan Raen Chai Shehej Booni neerew Naibur Shul
Karew Kainchan Raen Chai Bara Pathe Honee Neerew Naibut
To Zang Khaiyew".

Sir Jamshid Ji, poet laureate, has given the origin of Chinar and says that Chinar is Iranian tree which has been imported by various countries of the world. He has mentioned in his account Zina Avista. Herodotus, father of history tells us that Chinar was sacred to Sassanian emperors of Iran because Iranians call it 'Fazal tree' biggest tree. Rulers of Damoas Island in Mediterranean decorated the graveyard of their ancestors around by these chinar trees. Later on it was planted in Sicily and other Italian and French cities. The Govt. of these States recovered revenue from the owners on account of it. The inhabitants would enjoy its shade to the full during picnics. It was planted in Iberian Peninsula, Spain and Portugal. These were the days according to Pliny, Greek Historian, French army was invading the Roman cities and were turning these into ashes in the first century of Christian era. It was sacred in Spain and France that the growers watered it by liquor at the roots. During 6th Century AD it was planted in large number in various Balkan States and north Europe. It is quite evident that Chinar was in existence and planted during the reign of Laliteditya UKTAPIDA (A.D. 707-760) in Kashmir. Some opine that Islamic propagators imported this plant in Kashmir. Emperor Jehangir gives a brief account of it in his memiors, he says that it is one of the oldest trees in Kashmir and exists since ancient times. When I reached near Srinagar at Rawalpur village, it started raining torrentially. I alongwith other fine horse riders took shelter in one of cave holes of a chinar. My father Jalal-ud-Din Akbar, emperor had also taken shelter here with thirty four persons in its hollow according to Akbar Nama. I can very much infer that the chinar tree is the oldest tree in the valley of Kashmir.

Mrs. Stewart in her book 'Gardens of Moghal Empire' says that emperor Jehangir imported chinar trees from Iran so that his beloved queen's desire is fulfilled but this argument cannot be relied upon. He himself mentions its existence in his memoires. He further says that I have bought about 800 plants from Iran and planted them at Shalimar, Manasbal, Achabal, Vernag, Kokarnag (Bondu Zalangam) Shadipur and Ganderbal. In AD 1635 emperor Shah Jehan planted about 1200 chinar

plants at Naseem Bagh. During the reign of Aurangzeb-Alamgir, Islam Khan (Zia-ud-Din Badakshil) planted chinor trees in his town which he founded after his name Islamabad (Anantnag) which can even now be seen at Shir-Bagh and in the temples nearby. Moghal Governors held Durbars under the chinor trees on a raised platform. They discussed day-to-day problems of the State under the shadow of chinars and music dance and drama was also held. During the night chinor trees were illuminated which added the magnificence of the Durbar.

In AD 1398 when the construction work of Jamia Masjid of Srinagar was taken in hand Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin a few years later planted a few chinor trees in its compound and around it in order to give it an aesthetic view. In AD 1674 the mosque was destroyed on account of a big conflagration. When Aurangzeb heard of it, his first enquiry was whether the chinars were safe". Prince Dara Suikoh built a big garden of chinars at Vijbror (Bijbehara) in AD 1646-AH 1066. The chinars are still visible and extant. One of the chinor trees at Vijbror (Bijbehara) is above three hundred years old. Chinor leaves have played an important role in arts and crafts. In paper machie and walnut works the painting of chinars are beautifully decorated. Its wood is used for making of motors, furniture and oil presses. In Kashmir our shrines, temples and tirthas and churches are decorated by planting these trees in their vacant lands nearby. It is a sacred act. At present the number of chinor trees in the valley is approximately 50000. Badshahi Bagh at Bijbehara was decorated by prince Dara Shukh with chinor trees under the superintendence of Daroga Mohd. Zahid Abul Hassan Samarqandi. This site lies on the right and left banks of river Jhelum near the present bridge which connects Dacchan Pur illaqa with that of Nandi illaqa and is now converted into a park. Near Bachhpur colony, there was an old chinor garden called Bahaghi Illahi which was planted by emperor Jehangir in 1050 A.H (1640 AD-Nuri-Jehan). Planting of chinor trees was encouraged by the Moghal emperors. Nasim Bagh is entirely a chinor grove. It makes delightful camping grounds where they afford a cool and very welcome shade in the hottest part of the day. It has a place of honour among the threes of

Kashmir.

Chinar has a beautiful glamour when autumn lights up, big chinar plane trees burn red against the dark blue rock back-ground. There are few more brilliant breathlessly interesting sights. Chinar Bagh ('Bohemia of Srinagar') an Isunti Khul canal is cool and shady encampment in Srinagar owes its name to its magnificent chinars. Achhabal, Vernag and Kokarnag and Ganderbal will lose its charm if the chinars had not been planted there. Moghal emperors extended its cultivation. Jehangir and his empress Nur Jehan planted chinars in Shalimar garden in Srinagar although she did not long to see its growth. During Moghal period there were about 700 gardens or more near about the Dal Lake planted by chinars.

Nishat Bagh would be the a garden of pleasure. Chinar tree is a native of Greece and Western Asia. Both Romans and Greeks love it because of its shade. (Britannica Encyclopedia). Chinars on Ropa Lank Sona Lank (Char Chinar) were planted during Afghan period. Moghal emperors decorated the garden outside the temple of Mattan with beautiful Chinars. Its girth can be more than 63' as found at Bijbehara. Manashal and Bhagi Safa wrongly called Baghijoroka were decorated by chinar trees by Nur Jehan empress are still extant. In the Civil Lines near Tourist Reception Centre, Amar Singh Club one can see grooves of chinar trees which add the grandeur of the area, but I see near the Tourist Reception Centre great chinars have been spoiled by removing the first layer of its trunk which have resulted its decay. It is a royal tree and like the wanjut belongs to the State. It attins its magnificent size. In their old age the chinars decay and many trees at Nasim Bagh and Bijbehara are hollowed on.

5

Ancient Temples

Every country of importance has had a religious past, and even if the present finds ruined temples, the fact remains that those lofty arches and massive blocks of masonry were quarried and erected, bit by bit, by a people who expended their best on a building which was to be set aside for worship.

The ruined temples of Kashmir are solid, and simple of design, and yet they have fluted pillars and trefoiled arches which trace their origin to an artistic source. The keynote of some of these old temples is decidedly Grecian in character, which would be accounted for, as we have seen, by their erection by so gifted and widely informed a person as Akbar.

The best situated of the present ruins, though not the best preserved nor the finest, is the temple dome crowning the summit of the hill above Srinagar. The Takt-i-Suleiman, as it is named, is an object for an early morning ride, well worth the trouble of such a climb as it entails. Paving-stones mark the winding way, which zigzags up the face of the hill, and presently you emerge on a platform 1000 feet above the plains, while Kashmir and its surrounding mountain ranges lie spread out beneath you in a wide bird's-eye view.

There was an older temple still on the same site, which was built by the son of the great Asoka, of which very little is

left; but the present one is hoary enough to command our respect and to form a link with the past, as the date of this one even is said to be about A.D. 250.

Another temple ruin is in the Lidar valley at Bhaumjo, about the same date; there is also a great column standing on the road to Islamabad, 24 miles from Srinagar, and several other in various parts. But the best remains of all are to be found at Martand in the Lidar valley. This temple was built on a superb site: a gentle slope of grassland, with snowy mountains as a background, and close at hand are stretches of fertile valley, fine trees, and streams of cool water under their shade. This is the only temple which possessed what we name, in our cathedrals, chancel, choir, nave, and travepts. Although it is in ruins, we can still see what a grand pile it must once have been. The height is reported to have been 75 feet.

There was a wide flight of stone steps up to a splendid trefoil arch. On each side was a small chapel with lofty arch. On each side was a small chapel with lofty arches, said to have been built by the queen of King Ramaditya, who lived, we believe, in the beginning of the sixth century. This was over four hundred years before the battle of Hastings, and the temple was mentioned in the records of the King of Kashmir, Lalitaditya, who reigned from 693 to 729. There was also a wide quadrangle, 220 feet by 142, supported by carved pillars, and eighty-four columns carried the roof, which no longer exists.

If the outside influence which was great enough to raise such temples as these in a strange country hundreds of miles from the seat of rule, had only been as practical and benevolent as it was powerful, the story of Kashmir would have been very different. The origin of these temples was not based on any specially religious turn of mind of the people themselves, and the rulers succeeding Ashoka were not filled with his religious zeal, though Lalitaditya revived it. After his death the succession of his worthless son brought another sad period, which only served to make his reign stand out as a vivid contrast.

In 1586 the best thing possible happened for Kashmir in

its conquest by the great Akbar, who lived at the same time as our Queen Elizabeth, and for two hundred years Kashmir remained part of the Mogul dominions.

The fort outside Srinagar, Hari Parbat, which is still used as quarters for troops and stores, was built by Akbar on one of his three visits of Kashmir.

As the power of the Mogul emperors declined the old evils in Kashmir revived, and became even worse. Once more it was the scene of cruelty, oppression, and poverty. The worst time of all was when it was dominated by the Afghans. As under the imperious Duchess iun Alice in Wonderland, standing order of the day was "Off with their heads." The unfortunate people were even sewn up in sacks by twos and threes and sunk in the lake. They were even spiteful enough to spoil the beautiful Mogul gardens on the Dal lake.

At last, in their despair, they besought the help of th great Sikh ruler of the Punjab, Ranjit Singh. This was in 1819, and Kashmir was once more annexed by a foreign power.

As rulers of other religious beliefs came to Kashmir they generally destroyed to a certain extent the buildings they found, and as the religious fervour melted, the temples, no longer protected from any destructive influences, gradually crumbled to ruin. It has often been noticed that the decay of religion marks the decay of a country, and Kashmir, though she had been given a good chance, lost her place in the race of human prosperity.

With the decline of Buddhism the Hindu religion took its place about the eleventh century. Again it was changed about two hundred years later for Mohomedanism, and back again to Hinduism, and so on. The country-people are now chiefly of the religion of Mohomed, but the Maharajah and townsfolk are Hindus by faith. They all seem to pull along, however, possibly because their religion is more inspired by the letter than by the spirit.

The religion of Kashmir in these days is just about as mixed as possible, partly Mohomedan, partly Hindu, with the

worship of saints and the fear of demons still prevalent. This is not surprising, considering the many changes of faith forced upon the people by changes of rule.

The most ancient of all worship, even before Buddhism was brought in, was Nag or snake worship. The people imagined that huge snakes lived in every mountain, and especially near the springs at their foot. They used to build tanks at these spots, which the snake god was to occupy at his pleasure. Their veneration for snakes was no doubt dictated more by fear than reverence; but fear lessened by degrees, and a regular worship grew out of the ideas produced by old legends.

The syllable Nag, which is part of the names of many places in Kashmir, has been given from the place being dedicated to one of these snake gods. We find Vernag, "the place of many springs and the snake," Nagmarg, the alp of the snake, and so on. We know that in our own old Bible history the people of Israel were haled by worshipping the form of a serpent, even though it was the faith which really pulled them through. Then there is the serpent of the garden of Eden, a demon much feared. The origin of the Chinese dragon may possibly be traced to Nag worship, though it is also supposed to have been from the legends of terrible prehistoric monsters which have been handed down. Our dragons, too, show that our ancient history was much like any other. The strange thing about Kashmiris is that they seem to know nothing about their fine old temple remains. If we question them, the answer will probable be that they are just "old praying-places" built in the old days; but even the Pundits, or educated people, seem to care nothing for their antiquities, as, for instance, our old country-folk care for our Druidical or Roman remains.

It is pity to see the Kashmir ruins going from bad to worse. A special department is much needed, so that there may be some one to preserve them from further ruin. Very likely many interesting relics of the old cities might be found buried in thier ruined sites.

On one of the many tablelands or flat part of the valley were the lower hills slope up to the mountains, there are

some curious old stones firmly imbedded in the ground, from which they project about four feet. They are shaped something like blunt arrowheads, and the people will tell you that they are arrows which were shot from the bows of the gods in defence of the men of the valley at a time when they were preyed upon by huge giants, who devoured them by way of refreshment after their huge wrestling bouts. The undulations of the grassy ground are said to be the result of the pommelling of great knees and elbows.

Saint worship is very popular in Kashmir, especially among the boatmen, and the chant we heard as one of those dredging barges passed us on the Dal lake was an invocation to some special saint.

Every village has its shrine of miniature temple. But that their religion consists in keeping the outside of the platter clean is proved but the fact that most villagers in any position of trust will keep three accounts: one for the eye of his superior, one for his subordinates, while the correct one, showing real returns, is the one which lives in his own pocket and is consulted by him-self along.

The contrast between temples, ancient and modern is amazing, and yet it is in accordance with the history of the people. They did not of themselves build the solid shrines of worship which continue even now to attract veneration, and we have only to visit Srinagar to see how true this is. The principal mosque is built of wood, and has beautifully carved cedar-wood pillars. Among the temple roofs we can see, both Hindu and Mahomedan, is one called the Golden Temple. Its burnished roof of gold lacquer is still preserved, but other domes glint silver in the bright sunshine. Alas, some of them are only plated with old kerosene tins!

There is another temple, the daintiest and prettiest thing imaginable. In the spring, on the edge of the river, it makes a vivid bit of colouring, though built of humble whitewashed plaster. Its roof is a garden of purple iris and pink and white tulips. Brass bells and an elegant spire complete the feminine appearance of this little mosque of the twentieth century.

In future times no one will visit the ruins of the fairylike mosque, for it is built of mud, and to mud it will return. No one surely will care to visit, in days to come, any but a small minority of the religious edifices of this or last century, whether East or West. We count the cost too carefully for one things, and Time will not wait as he did, or seemed to do, in old days.

Missionary zeal is no less-we will hope the right kind is even greater than in past years-and no doubt there is a great deal of true Christian faith and endeavour among people who cannot as yet profess it openly. But most important of all is a spread of practical Christianity which shall, alter the lives of people who have been accustomed to look on their religion as separate from their daily tasks and pleasures. We want to teach truth for the sake of goodness, not for any advantage it may produce. We want to teach true strength in place of tyranny and abuse of power. We also want to teach that cleanliness is next to godliness, and love for one's neighbour of more importance than prayers on the high road. The practical example of British men and women is the leaven which is gradually if slowly spreading, and this is as important, even more so, than teaching only the letter of our religion.

(C.G. Bruce)

II

The architectural remains of Kashmir are perhaps the most remarkable of the existing monuments of India, as they exhibit undoubted traces of the influence of Grecian art. The Hindu temple is generally a sort of architectural pasty, a huge collection of ornamental fritters, huddled together, with or without keeping, while the "Jain" temple is usually a vast forest of pillars, made to look as unlike one another as possible, by some paltry differences in their petty details.

On the other hand, the Kashmirian faces are distinguished by the graceful elegance of their outlines, by the massive boldness of their parts, and by the happy propriety of their decorations.

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They cannot, indeed, vie with the severe simplicity of the Parthenon, but they possess great beauty-different, indeed, yet quite their own.

The characteristic features of the Kashmirian architecture are its lofty pyramidal roofs, its trefoiled doorways, covered by pyramidal pediments, and the great width of the intercolumniations.

Most of the Kashmirian temples are more or less injured, but more particularly those at Wantipur, which are mere heaps of ruins. Speaking of these temples, Trebeck says: "It is scarcely possible to imagine that the state of "ruin to which they have been reduced has been the work "of time, or even of man, as their solidity is fully equal to "that of the most massive monuments of Egypt. Earth-quakes must have been the cause of their overthrow. In my opinion, their overthrow is too complete to have been the result of an earthquake, which would have simply prostrated the buildings in large masses. But the whole of the superstructure of these temples is now living in one confused heap of stones, totally disjointed from one another.

I believe, therrefore, that I am fully justified in saying, from my own experience, that such a complete and disruptive overturn could only have been produced by gunpowder.

The destruction of the Kashmirian temples is universally attributed, both by history and by tradition, to the bigoted Sikander. (A.D. 1396). He was reigning at the period of Timur's invasion of India, with whom he exchanged friendly presents, and from whom, I suppose, he may have received a present of the villainous saltpetre.

As it would appear that the Turks had metal cannon at the siege of Constantinople in 1422, I think it no great stretch of probability to suppose that gunpowder itself had been carried into the East, even as far as Kashmir, at least ten or twenty years earlier—that is, about A.D. 1400 to 1420, or certainly during the reign of Sikander, who died in 1416.

Even if this be not admitted, I still adhere to my opinion,
CC-OAgamnigam Digital Preservation
Foundation, Chandigarh

that the complete ruin fo the Wantipur temples could only have been effected by gunpowder; and I would, then ascribe their overthrow to the bigoted "Aurungzib".

"Ferishta" attributed to Sikander the demolition of all the Kashmirian temples save one, which was dedicated to Mahadeo, and which only escaped "in consequence of " its foundations being below the surface of the neighbour-ing water".

In A.D. 1580 "Abul Fazl" meritions that some of the idolatrous temples were in "perfect preservation" and Ferishta describes many of these temples as having been in existence in his own time, or about A.D. 1600.

As several are still standing, though more or less injured, it is certain that Sikander could not have destroyed them all. He most likely gave orders that they should be overturned; and I have no doubt that many of the principal temples were thrown down during his reign.

But, besides the ruthless hand of the destroyer, another agency, less immediate, but equally certain in its ultimate effects, must have been at work upon the large temples of Kashmir. The silent ravages of the destroyer, who carries away pillars and stones for the erection of other edifices, has been going on for centuries. Pillars, from which the architraves have been thus removed, have been thrown down by earthquakes, ready to be set up again for the decoration of the first Musjid that might be erected in the neighbourhood.

Takt I Suliman

The oldest temple in Kashmir, both in appearance and according to tradition, is that upon the hill of "Takt i Suliman," or Solomon's Throne. It stands 1,000 feet above the plain, and commands a view of the greater part of Kashmir.

The sitution is a noble one, and must have been amongst the first throughout the whole valley which was selected as the position of a temple. Its erection is ascribed to Jaloka, the son of Asoka, who reigned about 220 B.C.

The plan of the temple is octagonal, each side being fifteen feet in length. It is approached by a flight of eighteen

steps, eight feet in width, and inclosed between two sloping walls. Its heights cannot now be ascertained, as the present roof is a modern roof in a modern plastered dome, which was probably built since the occupation of the country by the Sikhs. The walls are eight feet thick, which I consider one of the strongest proofs of the great antiquity of the building.

Pandrethan

This name means the old capital, or ancient chief town. The name has, however, been spelt by different travellers in many different ways. "Moorcroft" calls it Pandenthalan, "Vigne" pandrenton, and "Hugel" pandriton.

The building of this temple is recorded between A.D. 913 and 921; and it is afterwards mentioned between the years 958 and 972, as having escaped destruction when the King Abhimanyu-Nero-like-set fire to his own capital.

As this is the only temple situated in the old capital, there can be very little, if any, doubt that it is the very same building which now exists. For as it is surrounded by water, it was, of course, quite safe amid the fire, which reduced the other buildings to mere masses of quicklime.

Baron Hugel calls the Pandrethan edificea "Buddhist temple," and states that there are some well-preserved Buddhist figures in the interior. But he is doubly distaken, for the temple was dedicated to Vishnu, and the figures in the inside have no connexion with Buddhism.

Trebeck swam into the interior, and could discover no figures of any kind; but as the whole ceiling was formerly hidden by a coating of plaster, his statement was at that perfectly correct.

The object of erecting the temples in the midst of water must have been to place them more immediately under the protection of the Nagas, or human-bodied and snake-tailed gods, who are zealously worshipped for ages through Kashmir.

Marttand

Of all the existing remains of Kash mirian grandeur, the most striking in size and situation is the noble ruin of Marttand.

This majestic temple stands at the northern end of the elevated table-land of "Matan," about three miles to the eastward of Islamabad.

This is undoubtedly the finest position in Kashmir. The temple itself is more than forty feet in height, but its solid walls and bold outline towering over the fluted pillars of the surrounding colonnade give it a most imposing appearance.

There are no petty confused details; but all are distinct and massive, and most admirably suited to the general character of the buildings.

Many vain speculations have been hazarded regarding the date of the erection of this temple and the worship to which it was appropriated.

It is usually called the "House of the Pandus" by the Brahmins, and by the people "Matan."

The true appellation appears to be preserved in the latter, Matan being only a corruption of the Sanscrit Marttand, or the sun, to which the temple was dedicated.

The true date of the erection of this temple-the wonder of Kashmir-is a disputed point of chronology; but the period of its foundation can be determined within the limits of one century, or between A.D. 370 and 500.

The mass of building now known by the name of Matan, or Marttand, consists of lofty central edifice, with a small detached wing on each side of the entrance, the whole standing on a large quadrangle surrounded by a colonnade of fluted pillars, with intervening trefoil headed recesses. The central building is sixty-three feet in length, by thirty-six in width.

As the main building is at present entirely uncovered, the original form of the roof can only be determined by a reference to other temples, and to the general form and character of the various parts of the Marttand temple itself.

The angle of the roof in the Temple of Pandrethan, and in other instances, is obtained by making the sides of the pyramid which forms it parallel to the sides of the doorway pediment, and in restoring the Temples of Patrun and Marttand I have followed the same rule.

The height of the pandrethan temple-of the cloistered recesses, porch pediment, and niches of Marttand itself-were all just double their respective widths. This agreement in the relative proportions of my restored roof of Marttand with those deduced from other examples, is a presumptive proof of the correctness of my restoration. The entrance-chamber and the wings I suppose to have been also covered by similar pyramidal roofs. There would thus have been four distinct pyramids, of which that over the inner chamber must have been the loftiest, the height of its pinnacle above the ground being about seventy-five feet.

The interior must have been as imposing as the exterior. On ascending the flight of steps-now covered by ruins-the votary of the sun entered a highly-decorated chamber, with a doorway on each side covered by a pediment, with a trefoil-headed niche containing a bust of the Hindu triad, and on the flanks of the main entace, as well as on those of the side doorways, were pointed and trefoil niches, each of which held a statue of a Hindu divinity.

The interoir decorations of th roof can only be conjecturally determined, as I was unable to discover any ornamented stones that could with certainly be assigned to it. Baron Hugel doubts that Marttand ever had a roof; but as the walls of the temple are still standing, the numerous heaps of large stones that are scattered about on all sides can only have belonged to the roof.

I can almost fancy that the erection of this sun-temple was suggested by the magnificent sunny prospect which its position commands. It overlooks the fine view in Kashmir, and perhaps in the known world. Beneath it lies the paradise of the East, with its sacred streams and cedar glens, its brown orchards and green fields, surrounded on all sides by vast snowy

mountains, whose lofty peaks seem to smile upon the beautiful valley below. The vast extent of the scene makes it sublime; for this magnificent view of Kashmir is no petty peep into a half mile glen, but the full display of a valley sixty miles in breadth and upwards of a hundred miles in length, the whole of which lies beneath "the ken of the wonderful Marttand."

The principal buildings that still exist in Kashmir are entirely composed of a blue limestone, which is capable of taking the highest polish-a property to which I mainly attribute the beautiful state of preservation in which some of them at present exist. Even at first sight one is immediately struck by the strong resemblance which the Kashmirian colonnades bear to the classic peristyles of Greece. Even the temples themselves, with their porches and pediments, remind one more of Greece than of India, and it is difficult to believe that a style of architecture which differs so much from all Indian examples, and which has so much in common with those of Greece, could have been indebted to chance alone for this striking resemblance.

One great similarity between the Kashmirian architecture and that of the various Greek orders is its stereo-typed style, which, during the long flourishing period of several centuries, remained unchanged. In this respect it is so widely different from the ever-varying forms and plastic vagaries of the Hindu architecture that it is impossible to conceive their evolution from a common origin.

I feel convinced myself that several of the Kashmirian forms, and many of the details, were borrowed from the temples of the Kabulian Greeks, while the arrangements of the interior and the relative proportions of the different parts were of Hindu origin. Such, in fact must necessarily have been the case with imitations by Indian workmen, which would naturally have been engrafted upon the indigenous architecture. The general arrangements would still remain Indian, while many of the details, and even some of the larger forms, might be of foreign origin.

As a whole, I think that the Kashmirian architecture, with its noble fluted pillars, its vast colonnades, its lofty pediments,

and its elegant trefoiled arches, is fully entitled to be classed as a distinct style. I have therefore ventured to call it the Arian order-a name to which it has a double right; first, because it was the style of the Aryas, or Arians, of Kashmir; and, secondly, because its inter-columniations are always of four diameters-an interval which the Greeks called Araiostyle.

The Hindu temple of Martand is commonly called the House of the pandus. Of the pandus it is only necessary to say that they are the Cyclopes of the East. Every old building, of whose origin the poorer class of Hindus in general have no information, is believed to have been the work of the pandus. As an isolated ruin, this deserves, on account of its solitary and massive grandeur, to be ranked not only as the first ruin of the kind in kashmir, but as one of the noblest among the architectural relices of antiquity that are to be seen in any country. Its noble and exposed situation at foot of the hills reminded me of that of the Escurial. It has no forest of cork-trees and evergreen-oaks before it, nor is it to be compared, in point of size, with that stupendous building; but it is visible from as great a distance. And the Spanish sierra cannot for a moment be placed in competition with the verdant magnificence of the mountain-scenery of Kashmir.

Few of the Kashmirian temples, if any, I should say, were Buddhist. Those in or upon the edge of the water were rather, I should suppose, referable to the worship of the Nagas, or snake-gods. The figures in all the temples are almost always in an erect position, and I have never been able to discover any inscription in those now remaining.

I had been struck with the great general resemblance which the temple bore to the recorded disposition of the Ark and its surrounding curtains, in imitation of which the Temple at Jerusalem was built; and it became for a moment a question whether the Kashmirian temples had not been built by Jewish architects, who had recommended them to be constructed on the same plan for the sake of convenience merely. It is, however, a curious fact, that in Abyssinia, the ancient Ethiopia, which was also called "Kush," the ancient Christian churches are not

unlike those of Kashmir, and that they were originally built in imitation of the temple, by the Israelites who followed the Queen of Sheba, whose son took possession of the throne of Kush, where his descendants are at this moment Kings of Abyssinia.

Without being able to boast, either in extent or magnificence, of an approach to equality with the temple of the sun at palmyra, or the ruins of the palace at Persepolis, Marttand is not without pretensions to a locality of scarcely inferior interest, and deserves to be ranked with them, as the leading specimen of a gigantic style of architecture that has decayed with the religion it was intended to cherish, and the prosperity of a country it could not but adorn.

In situation it is far superior to either. Palmyra is surrounded by an ocean of sand, and Persepolis overlooks a marsh; but the temple of the sun in Marttand is built upon a natural platform at the foot of some of the noblest mountains, and the most pronounce valley in the known world.

We are not looking upon the monuments of the dead. We step not aside to insect a tomb, or pause to be saddened by an elegy. The noble pile in the foreground is rather an emblem of age than of mortality; and the interest with which we perambulate its ruins is not the less pleasurable because we do not know much that is certain of its antiquity, its founders, or its original use.

(Extract from "An Essay on the Asian Order of Architecture, as exhibited in the Temples of Kashmir", by Capt. A Cunningham).

Amarnathji Cave : Situated at an altitude of 13,900 ft. in a long glacial gorge high among the eastern mountains it contains a self-formed lingam of ice which increases and decreases with the waxing and waning of the moon. It is visited by thousands of Hindu pilgrims every year from various parts of India on the full moon day of Sawan (July-August).

Hazrat Bal : Situated at a distance of four miles from the city of Srinagar, this great Muslim shrine commands an excellent view of the Dal Lake. This shrine attracts large numbers of

Muslims on every Friday, and a common prayer is held in the mosque in which thousands of votaries participate. The shrine contains a hair of Prophet Mohammad.

Shah Hamdan Mosque : This is a famous shrine situated on the bank of the River Jhelum in Srinagar. It draws thousands of votaries of various castes and creeds. A big fair is held here in which Hindus and Muslims participate and pay homage to the patron saint popularly known as Shah Hamdan.

Chrar-i-Sharief : This shrine is situated in the village of Chrar, about 18 miles from Srinagar. It is dedicated to a great patron saint, named Sheikh Noor-ud-Din, popularly known as Nund Reshi who preached communal amity and brotherhood through the vehicle of verse. He was the contemporary of the famous poet-saint Lal Ded who hailed from pampore.

The Shrine of Khirbhawani : The shrine of Tulamula, sacred to the Khirbhawani or Ragini Devi, is one of the most popular place of pilgrimage among the Hindus in Kashmir. The shrine is situated in the vicinity of a spring, 14 miles to the north of Srinagar. The water of the spring changes colour frequently, sometimes becoming purple, sometimes green and so on. It is a very ancient shrine and even Rajtarangini contains its mention. There is a legend that his goddess was originally in Ceylon in the house of Demon King Ravana and after his death Hanumanji brought it here. Every year in the month of June a fair is held here when thousands of Kashmiri Hindus assemble to offer prayers at the shrine.

Vaishnow Devi Cave : This cave is situated in a mountain, 6,000 ft. high in Reasi Teshil, about thirty-nine miles to the north of Jammu City. During the months of September and October, people from all parts of India visit this cave to have darshan of the goddess who is enshrined at the extreme end of the long cave. There are also many self-formed images of gods. The nine-mile ascent to the cave begins from katra, the main starting point. There are two routes leading to the cave; one of these is pony road and the other a foot-path, which is more commonly used. This place is snow-bound during winter months.

6

The Monuments

I

The "Paradise of the Indies" is full of archaeological interest. Throughout the length and breadth of the Valley, a network of ancient monuments is spread. Most of them are in ruins. The pathetic sight of broken columns, fallen pillars and dilapidated arches of temples and shrines, dating back to hundreds of years, is touching as well as charged with a romantic beauty. Buddhist Gandhara art influenced the early architecture of Kashmir. Many Buddhist edifices and stupas survive to this day. Later on, strong Greek influences, which persisted for centuries even after the mediaval period, are evinced in colonnades, porches and pediments of the Hindu temples.

Kashmiri Hindus had a wonderful gift of choosing fine and high sites for their temples and shrines, so to command spacious views of the valley as also to ensure safety from the ravages of floods and denudation. The characteristic features of the architecture of Kashmir are : lofty pyramidal roofs-safeguard against snow and rain-trefoiled doorways, covered by pyramidal pediments and great width of individual columns in colonnades of imposing dimensions. It is quite distinct from the Hindu architecture of the rest of India.

The larger temples have rectangular courtyards walled in

by massive masonry and their enclosed spaces served as so many forts in times of siege.

1. MONUMENTS IN AND NEAR SRINAGAR

(i) Shankaracharya

A mediaeval massive stone temple on a hillock in Srinagar. Its high octagonal plinth, the stone staircase of massive slabs with arched gateway, wherein no mortar was used, the low parapet wall with niches round it and a stone tank nearby, are worthseeing.

An excellent view of Srinagar, the lakes and the mountainous valley, are obtained from the temple : it is indeed one of the finest sights of the world.

(ii) Shah Hamdan

On the riverside in the city, it is a rectangular mosque, built chiefly of wood, on the site of an old temple dedicated to Kalishwari whose shrine still exists on the bank. Wood carving on windows and doors and the panelled wood-work of the rooms are remarkable.

(iii) Pather Masjid-(Stone Mosque)

On the river bank, opposite to Shah Hamdan. It was built by Nur Jahan. The plinth is underground. Its stone facade, due to the compactness of massive blocks and the stone arches, is imposing.

(iv) Tomb of Zain-Ul-Abdin's Mother

Between fourth and fifth bridge, on the riverside. It is wholly made of brick. The brick masonry of the five domes, ornamenteally decorated with blue bricks, is interesting. A wall, made from massive, sculptured stones of some temple, surround it.

(v) Jama Masjid

The Biggest mosque in Kashmir-half a mile from the Fourth Bridge. Its chequered past epitomises the history of Muslim rule in Kashmir. The tall minar have pyramidal roofs. Its many

halls have a large array of lofty pillars, 378 in number, which support the roof. Ruins of an ancient temple are found in its outer compound.

(vi) **Peri Mahal (Fairy Palace)**

It is situated on the spur of mountain slopes to the west of Chashma Shahi. It occupied a school of astrology built by the ill-fated Dara Shikoh-killed by his brother, Aurangzeb, in the prime of his life-for his tutor, Mulla Shah.

An ill-preserved terraced Moghul Garden, a water reservoir in ruins, arched retaining walls of sidestarlis, running through big rooms having domed ceilings, form its attractions. It commands an excellent view of the Dal Lake and is well worth a visit.

(vii) **Harwan**

11 miles from Srinagar. Here there are the very interesting excavations of a Buddhist monastery, whose tiles, frescoes and ancient masonry are worthseeing.

(viii) **Pandrethan**

4 miles from Srinagar, on the site of the former capital of Kashmir. It is well-preserved mediaeval temple. The ceiling of the domed roof, showing classic sculputre of the early 10th century A.D., is worthseeing. The temple is 17'6" square with projecting stone portico on either side and string-course of elephants runs round it.

2. AVANTIPUR

13 mile above Srinagar, on the right bank of the Jhelum. Height : 5,225 ft. It was the site of the capial of a famous King of Kashmir, Avanti Varman, who built two magnificent temples, Avant Swami and Avant Sura which have been excavated by the Government.

(i) **Avant Swami**

This temple, dedicated to Vishnu, was built by Avanti Varman, in his youth, before his accession to the throne. The stone gateway, profusely sculptured, is very impressive. The

spacious quadrangle is enclosed by a colonnade of great architectural beauty. It is one of the gems of architecture in Kashmir.

(ii) Avant Sura

This temple comes first on the left side of the road from Srinagar to Anantnag. Avant Varman built it after his accession to the throne and dedicated it to Siva. It is less ornate in sculpture and less preserved than the other temple.

3. MARTAND

The reputed Temple of the Sun, 3, miles from Anantnag.

The far-famed temple of Martand, situated on a unique, commanding sight over an upland plateau, has been styled as "the architectural lion of Kashmir". This most finished of the temples of Kashmir has very imposing dimensions. The total length of the temple being 63 feet; the dimensions of the flute-pillared quadrangle are 220 by 142 feet. A graceful colonade of 84 columns, most of which lie prostrate with intervening trefoil-arched recesses, flank the temple on either side, Carving on the pediments, arches and on walls, is fine and delicate.

4. BAMUZU

Situated on mile to the north of the sacred springs of Bhawan, there is an interesting group of excavated caves, cut into the lime-stone along the foot of the hills. These form the only important group of artificial caves in Kahsmir. The passage of one of these caves leads to a small temple in the interior, flanked by two arched recesses.

5. PAYECH

18 miles from Srinagar. This small, pyramid-roofed temple, set in a picturesque setting, is the most beautiful of ancient shrines. In its design it is like Paudrethan temple but is more solid, being built out of only 10 stones. The central chamber is 8' square. It is rightly termed an "architectual gem."

6. ACHADAL

39 miles from Srinagar. There are the ruins of a Moghul pavilion. The underground earthen pipes that fed the royal hammam of Jehangir with water from the spring, are remarkable.

7. VERINAG

50 miles from Srinagar. The water of the spring was enclosed by Jehangir in an octagonal basin. 24 arches were raised by Shah Jahan who completed the work of his father.

8. MAMAL

This small masonry temple in Pahalgam is well worth a visit. There is a spring of pure water at its base and a rubble-stone wall round it.

9. MANASBAL

18 miles from Srinagar. There are ruins of a Moghul Garden laid out by Nur Jahan. An old Hindu temple, made of stone and partially submerged in water, is another monument.

10. PATTAN

17 miles from Srinagar. The ruins of two temples, built by Shankar Varman and his consort, Suganda, are found here. Its architecture is after the style of Martland, but much less ornate, though its carving is in a better state of preservation. The gateway and trefoiled niches are remarkable.

11. PARISHSPURA

14 miles from Srinagar. The ruins mark the site of the capital of Lalitaditya. There are the Buddhist edifice of stupa and a monastery. Some of the most massive blocks of grey limestone used in Kashmir, can be seen here.

12. WANGAT

Approached from Kangan-on the road to Sonamarg. There are ruins of two group of mediaeval Naran Nag temples which stand on a height at the mouth of a gorge in the Wangat Nala.

These cloisters where the far-famed abode of Sanskrit learning of yore in Kashmir. They formed the sacred gateway to the holy Gangabal Lake, 5,000 feet further up from Wangat.

13. BUNIYAR

Near Rampur, on the Jhelum Valley Road. It is the best preserved of the later stone temples of Kashmir. The gateway is impressive.

(1945)

Shankaracharya Temple : The Shankaracharya Temple is situated on the summit of the Takht-i-Sulaiman hill, to the south-east of Srinagar. It commands one of the finest views in whole of Kashmir. The view of the city with its green turfed roofs is without doubt unique. Neither the temple nor the hill preserves its ancient name. In ancient times the hill was called Gopadari and the shrine, probably some earlier structure which occupied its place, the Jyeshtesvara.

The date of this temple has been a source of controversy among archaeologists. General Cunningham and, after him, Lieut. Cole assigned it to the times of Jataluka (whom they date 220 B.C.) on the strength of local tradition. This theory has been rejected, firstly, on architectural grounds, and secondly, because of the doubtful character of the tradition. Another theory, advanced by Fergusson, is that the temple was built in the reign of Jahangir.

Kalhana in his Rajtarangini, definitely states that King Gopaditya built a shrine of Jyeshtesvara on the Gopadari, but it cannot be asserted with certainty that the present temple is the same as that was built by Gopaditya. It appears, however, probable that shrine occupied the same position. Gopaditya's date, and consequently that of his buildings, is uncertain. But the conjecture that the present temple must be at least a century or so earlier than that highly finished example of Kashmir architecture, the Martand Temple, seems plausible.

Khanqah of Shah Hamdan : Between the third and fourth bridges on the right bank of the river Jhelum in Srinagar City stands the Khanqah of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamdani popularly known as Shah Hamdan. Tradition ascribes his origin to the city of Hamdan in Persia.

It is difficult to determine of date of the present structure, but it is practically certain that it does not belong to the time traditionally ascribed to the migration of Sayyid Ali Hamdan to Kashmir i.e. prior to 786 Hijra (A.D. 1384). Baron von Hugel, who visited Kashmir in 1835, speaks of it as a modern-looking building. But there is no doubt that mosque or some such religious edifice stood here at least as early as the reign of Akbar; for Abul Fazal in his *Ain-i-Akbari* says that "Mir Sayyid Ali Hamdani resided for some time in this city (Srinagar), and a monastery by him still perserves his name".

Pather Masjid : Of the Moghul mosques in Kashmir, the Pather Masjid is the largest surviving example. Its facade consists of nine arches including the large arched portico in the centre. The arched openings are enclosed in shallow decorative cusped arches, which in their turn are enclosed in rectangular frames. The horizontal construction of these arches is remarkable. All of them have recently been closed up with rubble stone masonry. This is said to have been built in A.D. 1632 by the Empress Nur Jahan.

Tomb of Zain-ul-Abdin's Mother : The most attractive chapter of Muslim rule in Kashmir is the reign of Zain-ul-Abdin (1421-1472). He was a great parton of art, literature and industries. He was tolerant to his Hindu subjects and his this nature is also apparent from the plinth of the tomb which with its filleted torus cornice is entirely in Hindu style. Similar is its trefoiled entrance and its still undistrubed massive jambs.

Near Sri Ranbir Ganj, the busiest and the most important trading market in Srinagar, is seen this great historical monument with its high and massive domes. Its superstructure alone was erected by the King. Its enclosure has been used as cemetery since the days of Zain-ul-Abdin and many of the notabilities of Muslims of Kashmir are interred here.

Jama Masjid : The original conception and erection of the Jama Masjid of Srinagar are ascribed to Sikandar Butshikan, who reigned in Kashmir from A.D. 1390-91 to 1414-15. He is said to have laid its foundation in A.D. 1398 and completed it in 1402. His illustrious son, Zain-ul-Abdin, is reported to have greatly exerted himself in adding to its aesthetic attractions.

The Hari Parbat Fort : The hill of Hari parbat, crowned by the Pathan fort which is visible from every part of the city, has from times immemorial been a place of great sanctity in Kashmir. The name is the Kashmiri equivalent of the Sanskrit Sarika-Parvata, "the hill of Sarika". It is said that the valley was, in prehistoric times, a vast lake, one of the most beautiful in the world. In this lake dwelt the water-demon Jalobdheva. This demon wrought havoc among the mountains of the adjacent districts, but being invulnerable in his own element, and declining to fight at a disadvantage on land, continued his life of depredation in impudent security for a long time. The gods fumed and stormed in importent rage, and finally resolved to lay the matter before the Almighty Mother Sati-the controller of the titanic forces of Nature. At the pressure of the gods she assumed the form of a Sarika bird (Maina) and taking a pebble in her beak dropped it at the spot where she knew the demon was lying and finally the pebble swelled into gigantic proportions and crushed the demon by its weight. This pebble to this day survives under the name of Hari Parbat. A depression in the ground outside the Sangin Darwaza of the fort wall is pointed out as the spot wherfrom the parting breath of the demon forced its way out. The legend adds the gods in grateful memory of their deliverance took up their abode here. Since then every individual stone on this hill is reverenced by the orthodox Brahmins. In modern times, both Hindus and Muslims have appropriated parts of the hill for their shrines, but none of the shrines possesses any architectural interest. The fort's rampart and gates particularly Kathi Darwaza and Sangin Darwaza, and the mosque of Akhum Mulla Shah are well worth a visit.

Pari Mahal : Upon the mountain slope to the west of Cheshma Shahi is Pari Mahal, " the fairies' abode", a ruined

garden palace, the construction of which is ascribed by tradition to the ill-starred prince Dara Shikoh, who was beheaded in 1659 by Aurangzeb. The garden consists of six terraces, with a total length of about 400'. The width of the terraces varies from 197' to 205'.

In the uppermost terrace are the ruins of two structures, a barahdari facing the lake, and a water reservoir built against the mountainside. The reservoir was fed from above by a spring, which has since gone dry. In the middle of the second terrace exactly in front of the barahdari is a large tank with brick sides measuring 39'-6" by 26'-6". The facade of the retaining wall is ornamented with a series of twenty-one arches, including two of the side-stairs. The arches are built in descending order of height from the centre. Each of them is surmounted by a niche, the height of which increases in proportion to decrease in the height of the arch.

The third terrace is, architecturally, the most interesting portion of the garden. The entrance, which is of the usual Mughal type, arched in front and behind with a central domed chamber, is in the middle of the east wall, and is covered with a coat of fine painted plaster. On either side of it are a series of spacious rooms : the one to its north seems to have been a hammam. Fragments of the water-pipe are still to be seen projecting from a corner of its domed ceiling. Its interior is the most highly decorated of all the rooms in Pari Mahal. On the south of the entrance are two other chambers, but it is difficult to say what use they were put to.

Nishat Bagh : Returning from Chashma Shahi to the main road, the visitor proceeds 2-1/2 miles to the north to reach Nishat Bagh. This is the most favoured resort of pleasure-seekers in Kashmir. Its twelve terraces, one for each sign of the zodiac, rise dramatically higher and higher up the mountain side from the eastern shore of the Dal Lake. The stream tears foaming down the carved cascades and fountains play in every tank and water-course, filling the garden with their joyous life and movement. The flower beds in these sunny terraces blaze with colour roses, lilies, geraniums, asters, gorgeous, tall-growing

zinnias, and feathery cosmos, pink and white. Beautiful at all times, when autumn ilights up the poplars in clear gold and the big chanars burn red against the dark blue rocky background. There are few more brilliant, more breathlessly entrancing sights than this first view. The garden was laid by Asaf Khan, Prime Minister of Emperi or Shah Jehan.

The lowest terrace has unfortunately been cut off by the modern road, which has likewise shorn Shalimar of part of its length. The two wooden doorways as well as gaudily painted barahdari on the third terrace are innovations which date from reign of the late Maharaja Ranbir Singhji. These Mughal gardens of Kashmir owe a heavy debt of gratitude to this gentleman for arresting their decay.

There is a story that the Emperor Shah Jehan, who visited Kashmir in 1633, "decided that the garden was altogether too splendid for a subject, even though that subject might happen to be his own Prime Minister and father-in-law. He told Asaf Khan on three occasions how much he admired his pleasure-ground, expecting that it would be immediately offered for the royal acceptance. But Asaf Khan could not bring himself to surrender his cherished pleasure to be a 'garden of herbs' for his royal master, and he remained silent. Then as now, the same stream supplied water both to the Royal Garden (Shalimar) and Nishat Bagh. Shah Jehan in his anger ordered the water supply to be cut off from Nishat Bagh.

The stoppage of water made the garden desolate, dry and empty. Asaf Khan, who was staying in his summer palace at the time, could do nothing except feeling grief and bitter disappointment. One day, lost in a melancholy reverie, he at last fell fast asleep in the shade by the empty water-course. At length a noise aroused him; rubbing his eyes, he could hardly believe what he saw, for the fountains were all playing merrily once more and the long carved water-chutes were white with foam. A faithful servant, risking his life had defied the Emperor's orders, and removed the obstruction from the stream. Asaf Kahn rebuked him for his zeal and hastily had the stream closed again. But the news reached the Emperor in his garden

Shalimar; whereupon he sent for the terrified servant and, much to the surprise of the Court, instead of punishing him, bestowed a robe of honour upon him to mark his admiration for this act of devoted service, at the same time granting a sanad which gave the right to his master to draw water for the garden from the Shalimar stream.

Shalimar : Of all the Mughal gardens in Kashmir, Shalimar, the summer residence of Empress Nur Jehan and Emperor Shah Jehan, is one which has received the greatest attention from the later rulers of the country. The Pathan and Sikh Governors occasionally used it as their pleasure resort, and when, from the reign of Ranjit Singh, Europeans began to visit the Valley with comparative freedom, its marble pavilion was often assigned to them as residence.

The garden originally consisted, as now, of three enclosures, the lower one of which, however, has been considerably curtailed by the intrusion of the cart-road. The outermost enclosure was used as the public garden, and its barahdari was the Diwan-i-Am (The Hall of Public Audience). The second enclosure is slightly broader, consisting of two shallow terraces with the Diwan-i-Khas (The Hall of Private Audience) in the centre. The buildings have been destroyed, but their carved stone bases are left, as well as fine platforms surrounded by fountains. On the north-west boundary of this enclosure are the royal bathrooms. The little guard rooms that flank the entrance to the ladies' garden have been rebuilt in Kashmiri style on older stone bases. Around the beautiful black marble pavilion built by Shah Jehan, which still stands in the midst of its fountain spray, the whole colour and perfume of the garden is concentrated with the snows of Mahadev for a background.

Avantipur

Avantisvara Temple : The village of Avantipur, situated at a distance of 18 miles from Srinagar on the Anantnag cart-road, represents the town of Avantipura, founded by Avantiverman, who reigned from 855 to 883 A.D. Its chief interest centres in two magnificent temples with which its founder embellished it.

The first and larger is the temple of Siva-Avantisvara, whose massive walls rise in forlorn grandeur outside the village of Jaubror, half a mile below Avantipur. The temple which has been sadly mutilated, is situated in a courtyard enclosed by a massive stone wall, the western face of which is adorned externally with a row of fluted columns, but without any recesses behind. The gateway is in the middle of this wall, and is divided into two chambers by a cross wall. Its walls are not decorated with figure sculpture. The niches and the panels are quite plain.

The base on which the shrine in the centre of the courtyard stands is 76'-4" square and 10' high. To each of its corners was attached a platform about 16' square, which must originally have supported a small subsidiary shrine. It has a stair on each of its four sides. the stairs have a width of 28-1/2' and are supported on either sides by flank walls 17-1/2' in length. The sanctum has been reduced to a "confused mass of ruins".

There is a large assortment of architectural fragments strewn about in the courtyard, the most interesting of which are (1) the spandrel of an arch in front of the southern stair, (2) the flower-and-vase capital of a dodecagonal pilaster, (3) the spandrel of another arch by its side, and (4) the base of a plaster decorated with two seated rams and a dancing girl who plays upon a damaru (small hand-drum) standing on a throne ornamented with two lions at the sides and an elephant, facing in the middle.

Martand Temple : The temple of Martand is situated at a distance of 5 miles from the town of Anantnag. Being on the top of a lofty plateau, at whose stretch the broad verdant plains of Kashmir intersected by a network of rivers, lakes, and canals, thickly dotted with clusters of busy villages nestling like beehives in closely planted groves of trees, and encircled by snow-clad mountain ramparts - the temple of the Sun, as Martand originally was, commands a superb view, such as the eye rarely lights upon. It is this beauty of situation that contributes so largely to the sense of grandeur with which the sight of these ruins always inspires even the most unimaginative visitors.

There is some uncertainty regarding the exact ascription of this temple. But the most probable assumption, which is strengthened by the architectural style, is that the temple as it exists today was built by King Lalitaditya in the middle of the eighth century A.D.

So far little attention has been paid to archaeological remains of the Jammu Province by scholars of the subject. The forts of Reasi, Ramnagar, Bhaderwah, Gajpat, Basholi and the temples of Babore, Purmandal, Billawar, etc. are magnificent monuments that deserve notice and careful study.

(S.N DHAR, KASHMIR TODAY)

II

"Ancient India has nothing more worthy of its early civilisation than the grand remains in Kashmir; the massive, the grotesque, the elegant, in architecture, may be admired in many parts of India, but nowhere there is to be seen the counterpart of the classically graceful, yet symmetrically massive, edifices of Kashmir which, though inferior of Palmyra or Persepolis in stateliness, are in beauty of position so immensely superior to either"- wrote a qualified European critic. There are in Kashmir splendid and wonderful ruins, of cut lime-stone, dating from the third to the eighth century, to demonstrate that the ancient Kashmiris were great architects, and produced a beautiful and impressive style distinct from the Buddhist and Hindu architecture of other parts of India. It betrays, to some extent, Greek influence in its pediments, and its fluted columns with base-shaft, and capital. But the pillars were spaced further apart than in Greek architecture, and pediments pitched higher, and the temples crowned with pyramidal roofs tapering to a single lotus blossom, with the interior walls enriched with deep reliefs. In recent years much excavation and restoration have been carried out, and the results had been carefully recorded and surveyed, in 1933, by Mr. Ram Chandra Kak, in his excellent work, Ancient Monuments of Kashmir. This comprehensive and useful book should be kept handy by all visitors to Kashmir, interested in

its many archaeological monuments.

The best preserved of these stone temples are at Awantipura and Martand, both within easy distance of Srinagar. For a general sketch of the chief temples, one cannot do better than quote from the luminous article on the Architecture of Kashmir, by the late Mr. T.S. Growse, which brings into prominent relief their striking features. As he put it : - "Owing to the great thickness of the walls, and the massiveness of the plinth upon which the temples are raised, the exterior from the insignificant interior. Though less suggestive of Greek influence than the detached pillars of the colonnades, the pilasters, with their definitely proportioned base-shaft and capital, the square architraves of the doorways, and the triangular pediments that surmount them, but still more the chastened simplicity of outline and the just subordination of merely decorative details, are at a glance seen to be classic rather than oriental. Beyond the points above enumerated, the resemblance ceases; the porches are curved into a bold trefoiled arch of similar character with English Gothic of the first pointed period; and the roof, instead of being flat and out-of-sight, is a high pitched pyramid, broken however, into two compartments by a horizontal band carved with dentils and triglyphs. In short, the adaptation of classic forms was complete just so far as the differences of climate and the conventionalities of religion allowed; hence the roof became a prominent feature in the design."

Harwan has perhaps the oldest monument in Kashmir, containing the only remains of its kind in India. A temple and some tablets-built in the first or second century-have been unearthed here, which date the monument as belonging to the Kushan period, when Kashmir was closely connected with Central Asia. The remains are situated only a few furlongs below the water reservoir at Harwan, which is close to Srinagar, and well deserve a visit for their great historic interest.

The temple crowning the Takht-i-Suleiman, or Shankaracharya-which rises to the height of 1,000 feet above the plain, and overlooks Srinagar, and spreads away to the foot of the opposite but somewhat lower eminence called the

Hari Parbat-is one of the earliest in Kashmir. The first religious edifice on this commanding site was built by the son of the great Buddhist Emperor, Asoka, about 200 B.C. which was subsequently rebuilt, and dedicated to Mahadeva by Raja Gopaditya, who reigned in the sixth century of the Christian era. Restored, from time to time, it stands today at the top of the hill, and its platform commands a superb view of the valley of Kashmir, and the city of Srinagar.

Of more interest and in much more perfect preservation is the small cave temple at Bhaumajo, which is about half a mile from the village of Bawar, near Khanabal. The entrance to the cavern, which is more than sixty feet above the level of the river, is carved into an architecutral doorway, and a pasage fifty feet in length leads from it to the door of the temple, which is a simple cella ten feet square, raised on a boldly moulded plinth and approached by a short flight of steps. The square doorway is flanked by two round-headed niches and is surmounted by a high triangular pediment reaching to the apex of the roof with a trefoiled tympanum. This is perhaps the earliest perfect specimen of Kashmir temple, and dated from the fifth or the sixth century of the Christian era.

The little shrine at Payech-on the Srinagar-Khanabal motor road-comes next in point of antiquity, and in intrinsic beauty and elegance of outline is far superior to all the existing remains of similar dimensions. The cella, which is only eight feet square, and has an open doorway on each of the four sides, is composed of only ten stones, the four corners being each a single stone, the sculptured tympanums over the doorways of four others, while two more compose the pyramidal roof, the lower of these being an enormous mass eight feet square by four feet in height. It has been ascribed by General Cunningham to King Narendraditya.

Of somewhat later date are the temples at Wangat, in two groups, up the Liddar valley, at the distance of a few hundred yards from each other, and consisting respectively of six and eleven distinct buildings. In close proximity is a sacred spring called Nagbal, and by it the footpath leads up the height of

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Haramuck to the mountain lake of Gangabal, a celebrated place of pilgrimage. The luxuriant forest growth had overthrown and buried almost completely several of the smaller temples, while on summit of the largest a tall pine had taken root. The architecture is of a slightly more advanced type than at Payech, the most striking feature being the bold projection and lofty trefoiled arches of the lateral.

Of very similar character, but in more perfect preservation, is the temple at Bhaniyar, which stands on the very edge of the high road leading from Rawalpindi to Srinagar. The actual shrine is a cella of larger dimensions than usual, being 131/2 feet square in the interior, with walls 61/2 feet thick, supported on a basement, a 4 feet square, of singularly noble proportions. It is the earliest example that still retains its original enclosure, a cloistered quadrangle measuring 145 by 120 feet. Though the final touches of the chisel have been effaced by time, the colonnade is in other respects almost perfect. The wall is pierced by a series of pedimented and trefoiled arches forming shallow recesses for the accommodation of priests and pilgrims.

The celebrated temple of Martand is of far more imposing dimensions than any other existing example. It alone possesses in addition to the cella, sanctuary, choir and nave. The nave is 18 feet square, and the total length of the building is 63 feet. The sanctuary alone is left entirely bare, the two other compartments, are lined with rich panelling and sculptured niches. The roof has been completely removed, and lies in vast masses round the wall of the buildings; it is calculated that the height cannot have been less than 76 feet. The western entrance, approached by a wide flight of steps, now encumbered with ruins, is surmounted by a magnificent trefoiled arch, and flanked by two side chapels, one connected with the nave by the extension of their roof over the narrow intervening passage. On the other sides of the temple are similar arches with closed doorways below. The pillared quadrangle, which is 200 by 142 feet in dimension, varies in no essential point from that at Bhaniyar, but the carving is rather more elaborate. There are in all eighty-four colonnade as distinctly recorded in the Rajatarangini as the work of Agamgam, King Lalitaditya, who

reigned from 699 to 735. From the same authority we gather that the temple itself was built by Ramaditya, who probably died in the first half of the fifth century after Christ. Standing on a fine bluff, two to three hundred feet above the valley, it commands an extensive and beautiful view of the Kashmir valley : -

On slope of vast and undilating plain
 In solemn solitude, of noble art,
 The ancient ruins of Martand remain
 Built for Sun-worship once. Has the true part
 Of thy prone columns faded like a dream ?
 Engirdled by the everlasting hills,
 O Temple of the Sun ! His radiant beam
 Illumes this broken altar, and still fills
 These shattered halls at dawn with his clear light,
 Though human hands may no more loving tend.
 The Sun's pure glory is God's symbol bright,
 Thus thy great destiny can never end :
 Still eloquent of prayers, though stones decay
 And forms of ancient creeds have passed away.

From "The Ruined Temple of Martand" in Mrs. Percy

Brown's *Chenar Leaves*.

On the right bank of the Jhelum, about half-way between the towns of the Srinagar and Anantnag (Islamabad) stood the capital of the famous King Avanti Verma, called after his name as Avantipur. His reign extended from the year 858 to 883. The gateways of both are standing and the colonnade of the smaller temple. The style corresponds with that of the Martand quadrangle; but the semi-attached pillars of the arched recesses are enriched with elaborate carving of very varied character, while the large detached columns are somewhat less elegantly proportioned. They posses a wealth of carving unparalleled in Kashmir.

Shankara Varma, who succeeded Avanti Varma and reigned from 883 to 901, dedicated to Mahadeva two temples at his capital, now identified with the modern Pattan, where two stately temples are still standing. Each is a simple cella; but in

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the larger one the side process are so deep as to constitute separate chambers. In both the architecture is of the same character as at Martand, and of equal excellence. Here and there the carving is sharp and fresh, but the larger one was much injured by the earthquake of 1885.

The temple of Pandrethan is, next to Martand, the best known of all, in consequence of its close proximity to the capital. The domed roof is well worth inspection, being covered with sculpture of such purely classic design that an uninitiated person, who saw as copy of it on paper, would at once take it for a sketch from a Greek or Roman original. The temple is 18 feet square, with a projecting portico on each side, and displays a confused exuberance of decoration, more especially the repetition of pediment and trefoil, clear indications of a later date. It was erected by a Minister of king Partha, who governed Kashmir from 913 to 921.

Pandrethan's shrine farewell : Thy stones are falling
And totter to a final, sad decay :

What echoes of heart's worship here are calling !

What visions of thy early mystic sway !

From "Pandrethan" in Mrs. Percy Brown's Chenar Leaves

Pari-Mahal ("the place of fairies") is a massive building, now in ruins, standing on the side of the mountain on the southern side of the Dal lake, which was erected in the Moghal time for astronomical observations. It has a garden attached to it, with six terraces. The retaining wall is ornamented with a series of arches, and it has a domed ceiling.

"Peri Mahal!" strange and romantic name
Bestowed by folk-lore on this ancient pile
Above the Dal lake's shore :

The ruin hoar remains, its sad stem brow
O'erhangs the shining lake in frowning gloom,
Deserted-brooding lone-it's mystic doom!
I'll flee! lest spell malign befall me now

From "Peri Mahal" (The Fairies' Palace) in Mrs. Percy
Brown's Chenar Leaves.

Taper (22 miles from Srinagar, and 4 miles from Patan, on the Srinagar-Rawalpindi road) has the ruins of an old temple, discovered in September, 1942, in the course of the excavations carried out by the Archaeological Department of the state. The temple appears to have been built in the 13th century, and dedicated to Vishnu. Some of the stones among the finds bear inscriptions in the old Sharda script-giving the name of the architect, and the time when it was built. The base of the temple, its court-yard, and the plinth of the enclosure wall, have been exposed till now. The temple is a square, the base of its sides being about 60 feet. It is 8 feet high from the level of the courtyard, and its walls are four feet thick. It is thus massively built of stone, but the dressing is simple. A number of interesting antiquarian remains also have been unearthed in the course of the excavations (which are still in progress), as also some stone inscriptions, inscribed in Sharda character, which throw interesting sidelights on its construction. From Sir Aurel Stein's annotated translation of Kalhana's Rajatrangini, it seems that Taper is the ancient Pratapapura, a town built by Pratapaditya II, at the beginning of the 8th century. Though Kalhana is silent about the construction of this temple by Pratapaditya, the Persian historian, Hasan, clearly says (in his Tarikh) that the temple at Taper was built by Pratapaditya II, that it was destroyed by Sikandar "Butshikan", and that its material was used by Zain-ul-Abdin, his son, in constructing an embankment.

Lastly, the three charts which appear in Mr. R.C. Kak's book and which usefully supplement the information, are appended to this chapter for convenience of reference.

MONUMENTS IN SRINAGAR AND ITS VICINITY

From	To	Distance	Mode of Travelling	Remarks
Srinagar	Sankaracharya temple	2/2 miles	By carriages to the Mission Hospital and thence on foot	
	Patthar Masjid, Shah	By boat to		

	Hamadan's Mosque	Badhas and thence by carriage by Jama Masjid or			
	Zain-ul-Abdin's enclosure	throughout by carriage			3 to 4 Hr.
	Jama Masjid				
	Hari Prabat				
	Mosque of Madin Sahib				
	Vistar Nag...				
	Chasma-i-Shahi	5/1/2 miles by motor road from Srinagar			
	Pari-Mahal and back	1/2 miles on foot Chasma-i-Shahi			Srinagar
	Nishat ...	2/1/2 miles by motor road			Harwan
	Shalimar	2 do.			by road is
	Harwan	1/2 do.			11/2 miles

MONUMENTS ABOVE SRINAGAR

Srinagar to Pandrethan	3 1/2 miles	Motor Road	
Do. to Avantipur	18 "		
Do. to Loduv	16 "	Road Party unmetalled bridle-path	Tends and necessities must be taken rest house at Matan; Dak bungalows at Achhbal.
Avantipur to Payer and back	12 "		
Avantipur to Narastan	20 "	Do.	
Srinagar to Achhbal	39 "	Motor Road	
Do. to Martland	39 "	Do.	
Acchbal to Kother and back	6 "	Motor Road and Bridle path	

Martand to Mamal, two stages	30 "	Motor Road Pahalgam, opposite to which, across the stream, is Mammal	
Martland and Bamzu and back	2 "	Motor Road	
Srinagar	50 "	Do. Dak Bangalow at Munda within five miles	

MONUMENTS BELOW SRINAGAR

From	To	Distance	Remark
Srinagar	Parihasapura	14 miles by the Baramulla cart road, and 3 miles on foot or pony beyond.	
Do.	Pattan	17 miles	Rest houst at pattan
Pattan	Baramulla	Do.	
Baramulla	Ushkar		
Baramulla	Fathgarh	3 miles over the hill.	
Do.	Naranthal	3 1/2 miles on pony	
Do.	Buniar	14 miles	
Buniar	Bandi temple	9 "	
Srinagar	Mansbal	18 " by motorable road or by boat	Dak at Rimpore
Do.	Wangath	33 miles, 18 milles by motorable road as far as Wayil, thence bridle-path	

(S. Sinha)

III

It is after the rise of Buddhism that Hindus began to build temples. The Kashmir classical style is fundamentally different from any other style of Hindu architecture. Writes Sir A. Cunningham, "the architectural remains of Kashmir are perhaps the most remarkable of the existing monuments of India as they exhibit undoubted traces of the influence of Gresian art. The Hindu temple is generally a sort of architectural pasty, a huge collection of ornamental fritters huddled together, either with or without keeping, while the Jain temples, usually a vast forest of pillars, made to look as unlike one another as possible by some paltry differences in their petty details. On the other hand, the Kashmirian fanes are distinguished by the massive boldness of their parts, and by the happy propriety of their decorations."

"They cannot indeed vie with the severe simplicity of the Parthenon nor with the luxuriant gracefulness of the monument of Lusicrates, but they possess great beauty, different indeed, yet quite their own."

"The Kashmirian architecture is characterised by its lofty pyramidal roofs, its trefoiled door ways, covered by pyramidal pediments, and the great width of its intercolumniations suited equally well to rainy and snowy climates. There is no doubt that the Kashmirian style was well-known to the Greeks. A Kashmirian pillar has base, a shaft and a capital. The local architecture has also a stereotyped style. The trefoil arch of Kashmir is very original and interesting as may be seen from the remains of some old monuments."

Go wherever you may, you must meet with some old wonder. One wonders when he beholds an ancient monument whose huge and massive construction built in days of yore stand to this day as witnesses of a race of giants, un-equalled in the histories of chivalry, who once occupied this beautiful land. The reason is plain. The old architects built their temples solid. Their object was to construct imperishable abodes for their Gods to dwell in. They chose high ground as much as possible so as to avoid big floods. It must be remembered that

in those days the river valleys were much more full of water than they are now and the forests also were very dense. Those ancestors have bequeathed a rich civilisation second only to the ancient Romans. A few such historical places are mentioned below with a short account that could be available.

Hari Parbat Fort

As traditions has it, Hari Parbat is the pebble which the sparrow goddess threw on the demon who had lived in Satisar. The demon was killed and water gave way to land. Akbar built the Hari Parbat Fort and the town of Nagar round it. Muslim later named it Kohe Maran.

Hari Parbat stands on the Dal Lake itself and is located in the centre of the city. Apart from its monumental value it is a symbol of secularism. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs have shrines round it.

Shankaracharya Temple.

“The mountainous portal that opens,
Sublime from the Valley of bliss to the world”.

The Temple on the top of Shankaracharya Hill once called Gopadri is supposed to have been built by Sandiman 2629-2564 B.C. and later on repaired by Gopaditya 426-365 B.C. and Lalitaditya 699-736 A.D. According to another authority Jaloka built it in 220 B.C. Some assign to it the date 300 B.C., but this is generally considered inaccurate. Others mention the year 300 A.D., as the probable date of its construction. Tradition says that the Lingam was placed inside the temple by a goldsmith named Raja Hishti in the year 54 of the Hindu era.

An inscription quotes the name of Khwaja Rokm, son of Mirjan, in connection with its origin. Sikandar, the iconoclast, did not raze it to the ground because he thought (erroneously) that Mahmud Ghazni might have read prayers in it. The temple commands a fine view of the city that lies prostrate at its foot. Even in such a land of precious stones of architecture the Shankaracharya remains a gem of the first water.

The Pari Mahal (Kash-i-Mah)

This is the 'fairy palace'. Tradition has it that Prince Dara Shikoh designed it for his tutor Mulla Shah and named it after his wife Pari Begum. Another authority says that it was once used for astronomical obsevations by the Moghul Kings. It stands on an isolated crag and with almost perpendicular sides towards the top. The Pari Mahal has stood for centuries, weather-worn, sad, alone and untenanted which proves that the Paries (fairies) have it in their possession but where are they ?

Look on its broken arch ! Its ruined wall!
Its chambers desolate and portals foul:
Yes this was once Ambition's airy hall
The Dome of Thought, the palace of Soul.

—*Lord Byron.*

The massive building has a domed ceiling. The retaining wall is ornamented with a series of arches.

The Temple of Payech

The sloping knoll on which it stands, the cool shade of a clumb of walnut trees close by, the glimpses of a village seen though the trees behind and cheerful brook running at the foot of the slope, form a charming setting to a building which would be dwarfed by a scenery of a grander scale. The temple built of ten stones only, now in ruins, seems to be of long standing. Archaeologists do not definitely estimate its exact date. And who built it that also is not exactly known ?

The Temple of Pandrethan

This temple has one of the largest moats. Cunningham says that it was probably built in 921 A.D. by Meru during the reign of King Partha. Round it once spread the old captial of Kashmir when none but the Aryans lived here. It was also once Asoka's Srinagar. The domed roof of the temple is fine piece of sculpture. There are series of arches in the retaining wall.

Avantipura

The archaeologists are of opinion that the temple 174'148' here were built in the 9th century by King Avantivarman who had his capital 18 miles away from present Srinagar. The balconies alternate angular and rounded flutting set off the natural contrasts of massive stones of which they are built. Nothing sadder or more beautiful exists in India than this deserted city, the silent witness of a vanished dream. It still stands with its long circuit, its bastioned gates, its wonderful palaces, peerless in the whole Hindustan for its noble design and delicate adornment. Its carvings stand as they stood in Avantivarman's time but now a body without a soul. Ruinate it has remained ever since, desolate and abandoned. No later ruler of Kashmir has even aspired to dwell in Avantivarman's Versailles. The two temples known as Avanti Swamin and Avanti Sura were dedicated to Vishnu and Shiva.

Sumbal

About one mile from the bridge over the Jhelum on the left bank is Andarkoth, the former capital of Jayapida, the grandson of Lalitaditya. Kuta Rani, the last Hindu Queen of Kashmir, is said to have committed suicide here (1339 A.D.).

The Temple of Martand

The date of this temple is favoured to be 8th century by some Archaeologists. Cunningham places its date between 370-500 A.D. But Ferguson does not admit its foundation before the 8th century. Roughly speaking it is between 2,000 and 1,500 years old. The temple of Martand appears to be the ruins of a grand old temple 63 feet long enclosed in a quadrangle of columns and arches forming cloisters all round it. It is about 200 feet long and 142 feet broad. There are about 84 carved pillars many of which lie prostrate on the ground. Martand with its beauty in desolation has stirred the Poet's vision of Heber and compelled the homage of the wisest critics of Indian art. It is a dream in stones designed by Titans and finished by Jewles. It only needed a glass case. Its architecture is fairer than the site of the Parthenon, or the Taj or of St. Peter, or of the Escorial. This temple with a mighty tradition

behind it is now the lonely watcher on the mountain side. It alone had the strength to stand a huge blazing fire that could bum cities. The temple exists still but its designer and destroyer are no more. Certainly it is not less imposing than Persepolis.

Patan

There are ruins of two very fine temples attributed to King Shankaravarman 883-902 A.D. and his queen Sugandha who flourished in the 9th century.

Ruins at Wangat

"These are of steep wilderness whose airy sides
With thickets overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied, and overhead up grew,
Inseparable height of loftiest shade, cedar, pine
and fir."

Distance lends enchantment to this place-an enchantment which baffles the novelist. Nothing precisely can be said as to the date of its origin or its founder.

Bijbihara

A high and isolated Kareva lies at a couple of miles from Bijbihara. Here is visible the site of one of the oldest and most famour temples of Kashmir which was occupied by crowds of refugees and sodiers during the civil wars of king Sussals's time. The wooden ramparts were set on fire by the besiegers from which ensued a terrible holocaust. This sacred place gets its name from the temple of Shivavijayeshwara. A bridge over the Jhelum was in existence here in the 16th century. A fine grove of chinar trees, the remains of a garden planted by the unfortunate prince Darashikoh, is till visible on each bank of the river.

Shah-e-Hamdan

Kutab-ud-Din demolished the temple of Kaleshwari and built the present Shah-e-Hamdan mosque (after Syed Ali Hamadani who came from Hamdan in Persia towards the end of the fourteenth century and converted a large section of the people to Islam) with its material. Hasan Shah and Barkat Ali

rebuilt the mosque in 1479 A.D. and 1731 A.D. respectively. A spring dedicated to Kali is still believed to exist inside the mosque. The reputed walking stick of Christ kept in this mosque is exhibited on rear occasions. The hall is 63'43'. Shah Hamdan's death is given as 786 Hijri, corresponding to 1384 A.D.

Pather Masjid.

Nur Jahan built this mosque for offering prayers in it. The Sunnis had abandoned it since because she belonged to Shia sect. It remained under the State control and was restored back to the Muslims in 1931.

Jamia Masjid.

Sikandar 1390-1415 A.D. demolished the temple built by Taradeva 693-697 A.D. and out of its material he constructed a huge mosque now known as Jamia Masjid. It was first built in 1404 A.D. and afterwaeds rebuilt in the year 1479, 1619, 1674, 1841 and 1912 A.D.

Hazrat Bal.

The Zairat at Hazratbal on the Dal Lake is visited by thousands of Muslims on Fridays. It is here that the famous feast of roses is celebrated every spring.

Badshah Dome

Inside the dome there is a grave sheltering of the mother of Zain-ul-Abdin (1421-1472 A.D.). The plinth of the dome is the plinth of an old temple.

Harwan

A temple and some tablets have been unearthed during recent excavations at Harwan which look like the oldest mountain monuments as belonging to the Kushan period when Kashmir was closely connected with Central asia. Nagarjuna, the philosopher, held Buddhist congregations here.

Tapar

Archaeological finds were discovered at Tapar in 1942 revealing a temple 62a10' built by Pratapaditya of the Karkuta

dynasty. Certain inscriptions lead to the finding that repairs were made by a Brahmin named Gogga whose father Jagaraja lived in the reign of Pamanda, Jayasinha's son in (1157 A.D.).

Narasimha temple at Devasar

This temple was a basement 30' square and nearly 3' high. The portico is 15x11'. It looks having been built in the 12th century.

Kshema Gaurishwara

Kshema Gupta 850-858 A.D. is stated to have built this temple.

Didha Matha

It is now the tomb of Malik Sahib. The queen of Kshema Gupta built a temple here.

Narparistan

The edifice at Narparistan is attributed to Lahna Narendraditya 178-191 A.D.

Mahashri

It is now a graveyard. Pravarsena II is supposed to have built temple here.

Skandabhawan

It was probably built by Skanda Gupta, Minister of Yudhishthirai -139-178 A.D.

Lokhrigar

The shrine at Lokhrigar is attributed to Pravarsena II.

Sadahawashri

It is now the Ziarat of Pir Haji Mohammad. Pravarsena II is supposed to have built a temple here.

Rameshwara

Rameshwara now the Ziarat of Madin Sahib is ascribed to Ranaditya 414-474 A.D.

Amritabhawana

The shrine is attributed to Amritaprabha Queen of Meghvahana 22 B.C.

Vikrameshwara

This holy place is attributed to Vikramaditya, 512-553 A.D.

Bandi

The temple at Bandi belongs either to the Hindus or to the Buddhists. It was built in about 700 A.D.

Bhunyar

The temple at Bhunyar dedicated to the goddess Bhawani was built probably in the fifth century.

Fatehgarh

The temple at Fatehgarh is of long standing. Maharaja Ranjit Singh built his fort here.

Temples at Shri Narayantha, built by Narendraprabha, Queen of Prattapaditya II (634-684 A.D.), Tribhavana Swami built by Chandrapida (684-693 A.D.), Vikrameswara near Vicharnag built by Vikramaditya (521-563 A.D.), Vishnu Ranaswamin built by the Queen of Ranaditya, Sabhava Shri Pravarsena II, Khrew (Pampur) built by Padma, Ladhnu, Kuil, Payar built by Narendraditya (484-490 A.D.), Naristhan Lokbhavan built by Lalitaditya (699-736 A.D.) Bumzu, Mamal, Sangam near Amburhar built by Queen Suryamiti (1028-86 A.D.), Thiun Rarannag built by Jaluka (1394-34 B.C.), Narendraditya (308-273 B.C.) and Lalitaditya, Andarkot built by Jayapida (753-84 A.D.), Mosques of or Ziarats (1) Ali Masjid built by Ali Shah, brother of Zain-ul-Abdin, in 1397 A.D. (2) Akhun Mullah Shah (3) Hassanabad built by Shias in the time of Akbar (4) Pantachuk built by Hubba Khatun, wife of Yusuf Chak (1578-1584 A.D.) deserve only a brief notice.

IV

The valley of Kashmir is a jewel in ^{College of Education} Himalayas. It is an oval valley 84 miles long and 25 miles wide at its ^{Ratpur, Bantalab} base.

Jammu.

No. 3538

CC-OAgamnigam Digitized by Preservation

Foundation, Chandigarh

Dated

broadest point. The high mountians shield it against easy incursions, and though now and then politically hot, the people are gentle and warm and the climate is cool and bracing. Its rippling rivulets, the broad and leafy chinars, the glistening snow tops, the lush green fields have not only made it the cynosure of all eyes, but have evoked artistic responses of an unique kind.

Fortunately for us, we have now a clear picture of the earliest settlers-our ancestors in Kashmir, who battled against nature and the fury of wind and weather to leave a permanent record of their daily existence at a time when the art of writing history was still in the womb of time so far Kashmir is concerned. The excavations at Burzahom conduted by the Frontier Circle of the Arcaeological Survey of India have opened a new chapter in the history of Kashmir.

It is confirmed now that Kashmir was once a huge lake. This is enshrined in our tradition. This is also substantiated by lacustrine deposits on some of our tradition. This is also substantiated by lacustrine deposits on some of our Karewas, which are the lake beds. The story of Burzahom is the story of the earliest settlers in Kashmir after the lakes had dried out, the land formations had been formed, and the valley though mostly swampy was fit for habitation.

Burzahom is situated about 24 kilometers north-east of Srinagar near the foothills of Mount Mahadeva and about 5 km. north west of the famous Shalimar garden. It commands a panoramic view of the glistening Pir Panjal ranges, the lush green valley and the shimmering waters of the Dal Lake which is hardly half a mile away. It must have been an ideal site for fishing, fowling and hunting, which is exactly that our anestors did in about 2500 B.C. when they roamed in the valley, and encamped as they liked.

The excavations at Burzahom have revealed dwelling hits, out into the Natural Soil which is mostly loessic material. These dwelling hits are well like structures and are generally narrow at the top and wide at the base, the diameter varying according to needs. Post holes on the periphery suggest birch

cover supported on wooden posts as protection against the inclemencies of weather. Deposits of ash within the pits are clearly indicative of human occupation. Inside the pits are storage and pot pits which generally contain some bones. Besides these circular pits there are rectangular structures with attendant post holes suggesting superstructures with a sloping roof carried on a ridge as in the villages of Kashmir. There are storage and pot pits within the Chambers, and ovens generally in the centre. Bone and stone tools are suggestive of a hunting economy. There is no evidence which could speak of an organised religion to go by. The tools in bone and stone are axes, adzes, chisels, points, harpoons, needles, arrow heads and spear points, scrapers etc.

In the next stage are Mud Platforms for occupational purposes and regular timber structures with clear floor levels. The incidence of tools in bone and stone is greater. There are new types such as harvesters, scrapers, pick axes, suggestive of early farming, some composite tools, and a few tools in copper such as barbed arrow heads and chisels. Pottery is generally hand made. The deluxe ware of the period is black burnished ware. There are a few painted pots which may have imported. The burials are within the habitation and within the compounds. There are primary and secondary burials. In most of the cases, red ochre is applied to the bones. Sometimes animals and human beings are buried in the same pit. The animals buried are barasingha, wild and domestic dogs, ibex etc.

Before referring to the important landmarks in the development of architecture in Kashmir, it would be useful to draw out an outline of some of the important historical events which have a bearing on our subject. The early historical tradition as complied by Kalhana in his Rajtarangini mentions, among others, kings Ashoka (Maurya Dynasty), Kanishka and Huvishka (Kushan), Tormana and Mihirkula (White Huns), but the chronology of Kalhana is rather confusing. The name of Ashoka (3rd century B.C.) is connected with Pandrethan (Ancient Puranadhisthana, meaning old capital). Ushkura (ancient Huvishkapura) and Kanispor (ancient Kanshkapura) in Baramulla are associated with Kanishka and Huvishka of the Kushana

Period who ruled Kashmir in early Christian Era. Kanishka is said to have convened his great council of Buddhist divines at Harwan. The close associations with India are thus clearly indicated. On the whole not much is known of the early history of Kashmir before the reign of Pravarsena II (close of the 6th century A.D.)

The most outstanding names in the history of Kashmir during the Hindu Period are those of Muktapida-Lalitaditya (middle of 8th century A.D.) and Avantivarman (A.D. 855-883). Avantivarman's reign is known for the achievement of peace and prosperity which were all the more appreciated after the troublous time which ensued on the death of Lalitaditya who was a great conqueror.

Avantivarman's successors proved weak and inefficient and Kashmir had a very troublous time till the administration was in the hands of Queen Didda (A.D. 980-1003), who despite her sex was a strong ruler and subjugated the feudal chiefs. Again Kashmir went through more than three centuries of unsteady and uncertain time after her when Shah ir alias Shams-ud-din usurped the throne in 1338 A.D. and ruled till A.D. 1341. He established the Sultanate of Kashmir.

After about 50 years came Sikandar 'Butshikan' who aided and hardened by his minister Suhabhatta (convert to Islam), proved a heartless iconoclast and put thousands of men to the sword as the result of which there was a mass migration from Kashmir to India. Then followed the greatest Muslim ruler of Kashmir. Zain-ul-Abidin (A.D. 1421-1472) who is still gracefully remembered by the name of Badshah (the great king). It was given to him to heal the deep wounds inflicted on the unhappy Hindus of the Valley by his father Sikandar. He proclaimed peace and goodwill towards all without the distinction of caste or creed.

The death of Zain-ul-Abidin threw Kashmir into anarchy and the throne was in succession shared by the Sayyids, Magres and Tsaks till it was conqueered by Akbar in A.D. 1586 ushering in the modern age of Kashmir. Kashmir thus became a part and parcel of the Indian Empire. In A.D. 1739 Kashmir

was annexed to the kingdom of Kabul by Nadir Shah and remained under the Afghans till Ranjit Singh wrested it from Amir Dost Mohammed in 1819. When the Sikhs were defeated, Kashmir was transferred to Maharaja Gulab Singh by the British Government in A.D. 1846 under the Treaty of Amritsar. Gulab Singh established the Dogra Rule in Kashmir which lasted till A.D. 1947.

The important landmarks in the development of architecture in Kashmir can be properly assessed against the historical events specified above. Great artistic heights were achieved because of a receptive and a reactive mind to the ever changing pattern of Nature's enchanting bounties, which attract thousands to this part of India. Of all the arts Kashmiris were proficient in building activities, the remnants of which stand a testimony to the heights which have singled them out in this field also. The earliest traces are at Harwan twelve miles north-east of Srinagar. Situated half a mile up from the front hatchery, Harwan was a thriving and a prosperous Buddhist settlement in the early centuries of the Christian Era. The complex at Harwan consists of a monastery meant for the monks, a prayer hall, and a stupa where Buddha's relics must have been enshrined. These have been dated to 4th-5th century A.D. The interesting aspect is the masonry which is the earliest in Kashmir. It is either in diaper rubble or diaper pebble or pebble. However, of great importance are the terracotta (baked clay) tiles which are mainly on the highest terrace girdling a Chaitya (Buddhist temple) of the 3rd-4th century A.D. It is an aspidal (horse-shoe type) chaitya in diaper pebble style with a tiled courtyard going all round. The tiles are unique of their kind in Indian art. Their values lies in the fact that they represent motives suggestive of more than half a dozen alien civilization of the ancient world, besides others which are indigenous and local. These tiles in backed clay are 18" x 12" long and moulded with a design. The size though impressive is not the only attraction.

The desings, floral, geometrical, human and animal, form an impressive parade of the whole life of the period. The designs depict a colourful world and still pulsate with life.

There are dancing girls and musicians beating drums. Lovers chatting on balconies is a favorite theme. The animal world is also amply represented. There are rams and cocks fighting, geese, running ducks and peasants within a floral pattern. The geometrical designs consist of wavy lines, frets and fish bone patterns. Lotuses, aquatic plants, and some other flowers are amply represented. The architects and artists have combined to create a rich and a colourful world to feast the eye and elate the ear. The dress of men and women, oddly enough, is different from what should have normally been expected in Kashmir. Some of the figures are dressed in trousers and Turkoman caps.

After the close of this early Buddhist phase, the beginning of a grand classical development of architecture comes into view. The first records emerge in the 6th-7th century A.D. as evidenced in Shankaracharya temple. The Shankaracharya temple is a simple structure built on a high octagonal plinth and commands one of the finest views in Kashmir. The plinth carries a low parapet wall 23'-6" long on each side. The inner surface of this wall is adorned by eighty four recesses enclosed in rectangular panels. The main shrine consists of a cell, circular inside, with a diameter of 13'-2". the interior of the sanctum is covered by a modern ceiling. The brick roof also is not the old one. Some repair to the temple were carried out in Moghul times as it is clear from a Persian inscription which records the date A.H. 1954 (1644 A.D.). The temple was dedicated to Shiv.

The most important landmark is the temple of the sun at Martand, situated about 42 miles south-east of Srinagar in Dist. Anantnag. The temple of the sun commands a superb view, since it is situated on a lofty karewa. The temple was built by Lalitaditya who ruled Kashmir in 8th century A.D. From Shankaracharya to Martand is a bold leap. 'Few countries can show a more decisive leap forward in the materialization of its architectural ideals than Kashmir in the 8th century. Lalitaditya's masons showed a much more profound knowledge of the building art than that ever acquired by the Indian craftsmen of the Gupta regime.'

The ruins of the splendid temple of Martand are still the most striking of ancient Hindu architure in the valley. The main temple stands, on a double base. it is 63' in length and 36' in width at the eastern end and only 27' in width at the western end. It contains three distinct chambers. The wall of the temple are 9' thick. Figures of river-goddess Ganga and Yamna and Vishnu are elaborately carved and richly delineated. The main gate leading to the temple is an imposing structure on the estern side, and the main temple is enclosed by a colonnaded peristyle 220' x 142' containing 84 fluted columns. The most important architectural features are the trefoil arches and massive lintels. Even in their present state of decay they command admiration both by their imposing dimension and by the beauty of the architectural design and decoration.

In the next important rule of Avantivarman, two important temples at Avantipur, 18 miles south-east of Srinagar on Srinagar-Anantnag road were raised in the 9th century A.D. Avantivarman ruled Kashmir from A.D 855 to 883 A.D. and this was the most peaceful reign during the Hindu period. Art, culture and literary activities thrived under his patronage. When Anantivarman founded a new capital at Avantipur, Buddhism had already lost its predominant position, giving place to Hinduism, and the character of art too has changed. Out of the two temples rasied, the one nearer to Srinagar (Mile No. 17) is dedicated to Shiva and known as Avantisvara. The temple is situated in a courtyard enclosed by a massive stone wall. The gateway is in the middle of the western wall. The walls are not decorated with figure sculpture. The panels are quite plain.

However the more imprtant of the two is situated near the town. The temple is dedicated to Vishnu and known as Avantiswami temple. The main shrine is built on a double base with four smaller shrines at four corners. The courtyard is paved and is enclosed by a colonnaded peristyle (cells with arches and column 1'74" x 148-8". The columns on the western side of the peristyle are fluted. The entrance is in the western wall of the encloure. The wall surface of the entrance is both externally and internally ornamented profusely with sculptured reliefs. The chief beauty of the temple lies in its columns,

richly delineated carvings and sculptures. Vishnu is also represented in two panels. Avantivarman's temples are not equal in size to those of Lalitaditya but yet 'rank among the most important monuments of ancient Kashmir architecture and sufficiently attest the resource of the builder'.

After Avantivarman, there seems to have been a decline in the height achieved. The temple at Pattan, Tapar and Buniar are in this category. The temple at Pattan 17 miles southwest of Srinagar, which in ancient days was called Shankarapurapattana, after the name of its founder king Shankaravarman (A.D. 883-902), were dedicated to Shiva. The temple nearer Srinagar on Srinagar-Baramulla road is named after Sungandha, queen of Shankaravarman. The temple does not materially differ from other temples of Kashmir. The bigger temple near Pattan proper was built by the king himself. It is named as Shankargaurishvara temple. Only the main shrine without the plinth stands exposed. The peristyle and other minor structures are still underground. What is interesting in the main structures are still underground, central stone of the floor which measures 12'-6" x 10'. Only four miles down Pattan is Tapar, a temple dedicated to Vishnu. It is dated to 10th-11th century A.D. i.e. immediately after the temples at Pattan.

The temple at Buniar is situated on Baramulla Uri road, two miles above Rampur. This is the only temple which retains most of the features of all the larger Kashmir temples. The temple could be dated to 12th century A.D. The seeds of decline which had generated after Avantivarman, gained momentum by about the 13th century A.D. Internecine strifes and a decaying social order resulted in political instability. No monuments of any importance were raised in the 13th-14th century A.D. As was natural the Arts suffered due to lack of patronage and political stability. Changes of a far reaching nature occurred in the third decade of the 14th century A.D. Shah Mir usurped the throne of Kashmir in 1338 A.D. and founded the Sultanate of Kashmir.

The Muslims in Kashmir were in the beginning far too few

to initiate an architecture of their own. All that they did was to utilize the materials of disused Hindu temples for construction of their mosques. The most distinctive monument in this style is the mosque and tomb of Madin Sahib raised in the year 1444 A.D. at Zadibal. The base is entirely built of stones of a disused material of a temple. The superstructure is in brick and timber which is covered by a pyramidal earth and birch-bark roof surmounted by a spire. The wooden doorway is elaborately carved, and the ceiling is of Khatamband. The tomb of the saint is on the north. Its entire wall surface was decorated with glazed tiles of various hues, which have mostly been removed. The glazed tiles must have produced an extremely artistic effect when in position.

The next important landmarks are the mosque of Shah Hamdan and Jama Masjid. The mosque of Shah Hamdan set in picturesque surroundings is a typical example in the wooden style of architecture in the valley which was perfected in the 14th century A.D. and artistically designed. It appears that the art of masonry was lost, and the wooden style was perfected. The main mosque apart from the verandah extensions is a 70 ft. square and is two storeis in height, surmounted by a pyramidal roof in three tiers covered with turf, with tulips and rises in it during the season, which gives the picture of a rare beauty. The final at the top goes to a height of 125 ft. above the ground. However, the most interesting items are the other smaller structures in the forms of arcades (series of arches), verandah and porticoes. The openings are filled with lattic work (Pinjara) and enriched with carved wooden insertions. Some of the doors and windows have been richly carved, and the wood work of the plinth is an exquistie piece of workmanship.

However, the most important monument of the Muslim period is the Jama Masjid located in the lower part of the city of Srinagar. Its foundation is said to have been laid in 1398 A.D. by Sikandar Butshikan who ruled Kashmir from A.D. 1390 to 1414. It was completed in A.D. 1402. It caught fire thrice during its chequered history. The first fire was in A.D. 1479 and its reconstruction was begun by Sultan Fatch Shah.

During Jahangir's rule of Kashmir, it again caught fire in A.D. 1620. Its reconstruction was started immediately after and completed in 17 years. The mosque was again destroyed by fire in A.D. 1674 during the period of Aurangzeb and the reconstruction was completed in three years. The Moghuls built it absolutely according to the old plan. Subsequently repairs were executed during the Dogra period.

In design it contains all the essential elements of the wooden style of architecture developed in Kashmir. The courtyard is some 240 ft. in diameter while the exterior brick wall, some 30 ft. high, forms a square about 285 ft. to a side. The principal features are the four minars, one in the middle of each side. They are covered by a series of pyramidal roofs crowned by a high pinnacle. The main entrance is on the south. The real greatness of the conception, however, lies in the treatment of the pillared chamber. They are composed of ranges of pillars made out of a single Deoda trunk varying from nearly 25' to 50' in height and there are 370 such pillars in the composition.

With the conquest of Kashmir by Moghuls in the 1586 A.D. the old order changed again. The wooden style of architecture had no patronage and as such started fading out. The art of building in stones was revived according to the architectural ideals of the time. The art of building in stones had been forgotten to such an extent in Kashmir that emperor Akbar had to import 200 master builders from outside. The style that the Moghuls introduced does not need detailed description, since the style is distinctive in character and as prevalent in other parts of the Empire such as Agra and Delhi at that stage. The most important buildings in this style are the rampart wall of the Hari Parbat Fort, the Pather Masjid and the mosque of Akhun Malla Shah. The Hari Parbat Fort was built by the Afghans. But the rampart wall which is three miles in circumference and the two gates Kathi and Sangin Darwaza were raised during Akbar's reign. Kathi Darwaza was the main entrance as the inscription have been put here only. It is a simple structure but dignified. Sangin Darwaza is more expansive and ornate and there are elegant windows on either side. It is probable that Akbar had some sort of a fortress erected on the

hill, but there is practically nothing of the original work left. Pather Masjid situated in the heart of Srinagar was built in A.D. 1623 by empress Nur Jahan.

The Moghuls also laid out terraced gardens which have never been excelled in any part of Asia. These gardens are Nishat, Shalamar, Chasmashahi and Achabal are the main source of attraction for thousands of visitors. In paying a tribute to their loveliness Sir John Marshall writes, 'There are no other gardens in all Asia round which history and legend have woven so much romance which nature and man have combined to make so lovely. The gardens of the Taj at Agra, of Shalamar or of Shahdara are beautiful of their kind, but they can never hope to rival their sisters in Kashmir, because they lack entirely the majestic surroundings of mountain, pine forest and snowfields, in which the latter are set; and no flowers or grass or trees can ever attain the same perfection in the plains of India as they can in the highlands of Kashmir'.

This then is the story of monuments as reflected in stone, wood, brick and lime, quite a rich record of achievements and failures of the people of Kashmir. The story is an eventful one which still speaks to us, though mutely, through the haze of time, of the trials and tribulation our ancestors gone though and the heights achieved in this field.

It is after the rise of Buddhism that Hindus began to build temples. The Kashmir classical style is fundamentally different from any other style of Hindu architecture. Writes Sir A. Cunningham, "The architectural remains of Kashmir are perhaps the most remarkable for the influence of Grecian art. The Hindu temple is generally a sort of architectural pasty, a huge collection of ornamental fritters huddled together, either with or without keeping, while the Jain temples, usually a vast forest of pillars, made to look as unlike one another as possible by some paltry differences in their petty details. On the other hand, the Kashmirian faces are distinguished by the graceful elegance of their outlines, by the massive boldness of their parts, and by the happy propriety of their decorations."

'They cannot indeed vie with the severe simplicity of the

Parthenon nor with the luxuriant gracefulness of the monument of Lusicrates, but they possess great beauty, different indeed, yet quite their own.'

'The Kashmirian architecture is characterised by its lofty pyramidal roofs, its trefoiled door ways, covered by pyramidal pediments, and the great width of its intercoluminations suited equally well to rainy and snowy climates. There is no doubt that the Kashmirian style was well-known to the Greeks. A Kashmirian pillar has a base, a shaft and a capital. The local architecture has also a stereotyped style. The trefoil arch of Kashmir is very orginal and interesting as may be seen from the remains of some old monuments'.

Go wherever you may, you must meet with some old wonder. One wonders when he beholds an ancient monument whose huge and massive constructions built in days on yore stand to this day as witnesses of a race of giants, unequalled in the histories of chivalry, who once occupied this beautiful land. The reason is plain. The old architects built their temples solid. Their object was to construct imperishable abodes for their Gods to dwell in. They chose high ground as much as possible so as to avoid big floods. It must be remembered that in those days the river valleys were much more full of water than they are now and the forests also were very dense. Those ancestors have bequeathed a rich civilization second only to the ancient Romans. A few such historical places are mentioned below with a short account that could be available.

Hari Parbat Fort

As tradition has it, Hari Parbat is the pebble which the narrow goddess threw on the demon who had lived in Kashmir. The demon was killed and water gave way to land. Akbar built the Hari Parbat Fort and the town of Nagar round it. Muslims later named it Kohe Maran.

Hari Parbat stands on the Dal Lake itself and is located in the centre of the city. Apart from its monumental value it is a symbol of secularism. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs have shrines round it.

Shankaracharya Temple

'The mountainous portal that opens,
Sublime from the Valley of bliss to the world.'

'The Temple on the top of Shankaracharya Hill once called Gopadri is supposed to have been built by Sandiman 2629-2564 B.C. and later on repaired by Gopaditya 426-365 B.C. and Lalitaditya 699-736 A.D. According to another authority Jaloka built it in 220 B.C. Some assign to it the date 300 B.C., but this is generally considered inaccurate. Others mention the year 300 A.D. as the probably date of its construction. Tradition says that the Lingam was placed inside the temple by a goldsmith named Raja Hishti in the year 54 of the Hindu era.'

An inscription quotes the name of Khwaja Rokm, son of Mirjan, in connection with its origin. Sikandar, The Iconoclast, did not raze it to the ground because he thought (erroneously) that Mahmud Ghazni might have read prayers in it. The temple commands a fine view of the city that lies prostrate at its foot. Even in such a land of precious stones of architecture the Shankaracharya remains a gem of the first water.

The Pari Mahal (Kash-i-Mah)

This is the 'fairy palace'. Tradition has it that Prince Dara Shikoh designed it for his tutor Mulla Shah and named it after his wife Pari Begun. Another authority says that it was once used for astronomical observation by the Moghul Kings. It stands on an isolated crag and with almost perpendicular sides towards the top. The Pari Mahal has stood for centuries, weather-worn, sad, alone and untenanted which proves that the Fairies (fairies) have it in their possession but where are they ?

Look on its broken arch ! Its ruined wall !

Its chambers desolate and portals foul :

Yes this was once Ambition's fairy hall

The Dome of thought, the Palace of Soul,

-Lord Byron

The massive building has a domed ceiling. The retaining wall is ornamented with a series of arches.

The Temple of Payech

The sloping knoll on which it stands, the cool shade of a clump of walnut trees close by, the glimpses of a village seen through the trees behind and cheerful brook running at the foot of the slope, form a charming setting to a building which would be dwarfed by a scenery of a grander scale. The temple built of ten stones only, now in ruins, seems to be of long standing. Archaeologists do not definitely estimate its exact date. And who built it that also is not exactly known ?

The Temple of Pandretham

This temple has one of the largest moats. Cunningham says that it was probably built in 921 A.D. by Meru during the reign of King Partha. Round it once spread the old capital of Kashmir when none but the Aryans lived here. It was also once Asoka's Srinagar. The domed roof of the temple is a fine piece of sculpture. There are series of arches in the retaining wall.

Avantipura

The archaeologists are of opinion that the temples 174' x 148' here were built in the 9th century by King Avantivarman who had his capital 18 miles away from present Srinagar. The balconies alternate angular and rounded flutting set off the natural contrasts of massive stones of which they are built. Nothing sadder or more beautiful exists in India than this deserted city, the silent witness of a vanished dream. It still stands with its long circuit, its bastioned gates, its wonderful palaces, peerless in the whole Hindustan for its noble design and delicate adornment. Its carvings stand as they stood in Avantivarman's time but now a body without a soul. Ruinate it has remained ever since, desolate and abandoned. No later ruler of Kashmir has even aspired to dwell in Avantivarman's Versailles. The two temples known as Avanti Swamin and Avanti Sura were dedicated to Vishnu and Shiva.

Sumbal

About one mile from the bridge over the Jhelum on the left bank is Andarkoth, the former capital of Jayapida, the

grandson of Lalitaditya. Kuta Rani, the last Hindu Queen of Kashmir, is said to have committed suicide here (1339 A.D.)

The Temple of Martand

The date of this temple is favoured to be 8th century by some Archaeologists. Currinngham places its date between 370-500 A.D. But Ferguson does not admit its foundation before the 8th Century, Roughly speaking it is between 2,000 and 1,500 years old. The temple of Martand appears to be the ruins of a grand old temple 63 feet long enclosed in a quadrangle of columns and arches forming cloister all round it. It is about 200 feet long and 142 feet broad. There are about 84 carved pillars many of which lie prostrate on the ground. Martand with its beauty in desolation has stirred the Poet's vision of a Heber and compelled the homage of the wisest critics of Indian art. It is a dream in stones designed by Tuitans and finished by Jewellers. It only needed a glass case. Its architecture is fairer than the site of the Parthenon, or of the Taj or St Peter, or of the Escorial. This temple with a mighty tradition behind it is now the lonely watcher on the mountain side. It alone had the strength to stand a huge blazing fire that could burn cities. The temple exists still but its designer and destroyer are no more. Certainly it is not less imposing than Persepolis.

Pattan

There are ruins of two very fine temple attributed to King Shankaravarman 883-902 A.D. and his queen Sugandha who flourished in the 9th century.

Ruins at Wangat

'These are of steep wilderness whose airy sides
With thickets overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied, and overhead up grew,
Inseparable height of loftiest shade, cedar, pine and fit'.

Distance lends enchantment to this place-an enchantment which baffles the novelist. Nothing precisely can be said as to the date of its origin or its founder.

Bijbihara

A high and isolate Kareva lies at a couple of miles from Bijbihara. Here is visible the site of one of the oldest and most famous temples of Kashmir which was occupied by crowds of refugees and soldiers during the civil war of king Sussals's time. The wooden ramparts were set on fire by the besiegers from which ensued a terrible holocaust. This sacred place gets its name from the temple of Shivavijayeshwara. A bridge over the Jhelum was in existence here in the 16th century. A fine grove of chinar trees, the remains of a garden planted by the unfortunate prince Darashikoh, is still visible on each bank of the river.

Shah-e-Hamdan

Kutab-ud-Din demolished the temple of Kaleshwari and built the present Shah-e-Hamdan mosque (after Syed Ali Hamadani who came from Hamdan in Persia towards the end of the fourteenth century and converted a large section of the people to Islam) with its material. Hasan Shah and Barkat Ali rebuilt the mosque in 1479 A.D. and 1731 A.D. respectively. A spring dedicated to Kali is still believed to exist inside the mosque. The reputed waling stick of Christ kept in this mosque is exhibited on rare occasions. The hall is 63' x 43'. Shah Hamdan's death is given as 786 Hijri, corresponding to 1384 A.D.

Pather Masjid

Nur Jahan built this mosque for offering prayers in it. The Sunnis had abandoned it since because she belonged to Shia sect. It remained under the State control and was restored back to the Muslims in 1931.

Jamia Masjid

Sikandar 1390-1415 A.D. demolished the temple built by Taradeva 693-697 A.D. and out of its material he constructed a huge mosque now known as Jamia Masjid. It was first built in 1404 A.D. and afterwards rebuilt in the year 1479, 1619, 1674, 1841 and 1912 A.D.

Hazrat Bal

The 17th century old Zairat at Hazratbal on the Dal Lake is visited by thousands of Muslims on Fridays. In 1969 Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah undertook rebuilding of the mosque in Madina model flat roof, dome and a minaret at an estimated cost of Rs. ten lakhs. People offered donations freely. The outer facade is white Rajasthani marble. It is here that the famous feast of roses is celebrated every spring.

Badshah Dome

Inside the dome there is a grave sheltering of the mother of Zain-ul-Abdin (1421-1472 A.D.). The plinth of the dome is the plinth of an old temple.

Harwan

A temple and some tablets have been unearthed during recent excavations at Harwan which look like the oldest mountain monuments.

According to one account Jesus Christ fainted on the cross, was revived and emigrated from Palestine to Kashmir. Jesus swooned on the cross and was removed alive by Joseph of Arimathea. He later showed himself to disciples to prove he was alive, then went to India to preach to the 'other sheep' not of his flock.

These "other sheep" were the inhabitants of Kashmir who trace their descent from the lost tribes of Israel which did not return to Palestine after the captivity in Babylon'.

Jesus' burial place is called the Tomb of Yuzassif the Prophet.

Actually it is Prophet Mohammad's hair that is enshrined in the Ziarat, For a detailed account see text as belonging to the Kushan period when Kashmir was closely connected with Central Asia. Nagarjuna, the philosopher, held Buddhist congregations here.

Tapar

Archaeological finds were discovered at Tapar in 1942

revealing a temple 62'X10' built by Partapaditiya of the Karkuta dynasty. Certain inscriptions lead to the finding that repairs were made by a Brahmin named Gogga whose father Jagaraja lived in the reign of Pamands, Jayasinha's sons in (1157 A.D.)

Narasimha Temple at Devasar

This temple has a basement 30' square and nearly 3' high. The portico is 15'X11'. It looks having been built in the 12th Century.

Kshema Gourishwara

Kshema Gupta 850-858 A.D is stated to have built this temple.

Didha Matha

Now the tomb of Malik Sahib. The queen of Kshema Gupta has a temple here.

Narparistan

The edifice at Narparistan is attributed to Lahna Narendraditya 178-191 A.D.

Mahashri

It is now a graveyard. Pravarsena II is supposed to have built temple here.

Shandobhawan

It was probably built by Skanda Gupta, Minister of Yudhishthirall, 139-178 A.D.

Lokhrigar

The shrine at Lokhrigar is attributed to Pravarsena II.

Sadahawashir

It is now the Ziarat of Pir Haji Mohammad. Pravarsena II is supposed to have built a temple here.

Rameshwara

Rameshwara now the Ziarat of Madin Sahib is ascribed to Ramaditya 414-474 A.D.

The shrine is attributed to Amritaprabha, Queen of

Meghvahana 22 B.C.

Vikrameshwara

This holy place is attributed to Vikramaditya 521-553 A.D.

Bandi

The temple at Bandi belongs either to the Hindus or to the Buddhists. It was built in about 700 A.D.

Bhunyar

The temple at Bhunyar dedicated to the goddess Bhawani was built probably in the fifth century.

Fatehgarh

The temple at Fatehgarh is of long standing. Maharaja Ranjit Singh built his Fort here.

Temples at Shri Narayantha, built by Narendraprabha, Queen of Prattapaditya II (634-684 A.D.), Tribhavana Swami built by Chandrapida (684-693 A.D.), Vikrameshwara near Vicharnag built by Vikramaditya (521-563 A.D.), vishnu Ranaswamin built by the Queen of Ranaditya, Sabhava Shri Pravarsena II, Khrew (Pampur) built by Padma, Ladhnu, Kuil Payar built by Narendraditya (483-490 A.D.), Naristhan Lokbhavan built by Lalitaditya (699-736 A.D.), Bumzu, Mamal, Sangam near Amburhar built by Queen Suryamati (1028-86 A.D.), Thiun Rarannag built by Jaluka (1394-34 B.C.), Narendraditya (308-273 B.C.), and Lalitaditya, Andarkot built by Jayapida (753-84 A.D.). Mosques or Ziarats (1) Ali Masjid built by Ali Shah, brother of Zain-ul-Abdin in 1397 A.D. (2) Akhun Mullah Shah (3) Hassanabad built by Shias in the time of Akbar (4) Pantachuk built by Hubba Khatun, wife of Yusuf Chak (1578-1584 A.D.) deserve only a brief notice.

7

Cultural Heritage

The culture of Kashmir sprang from Aryans and was influenced during the course of history by Jews, Greeks, Turks, Chinese, Muslims and what not. Writes Arthur Neve "Ancient India had nothing more worthily of its early civilization than the grand remains of Kashmir." Says Kalhana "Kashmiris were called Shestrashilpira, i.e., architects." Kashmir is a fusion of cultures and languages. The principal cultural division of the State are-(a) Dugar (b) Ladakh (c) Baltistan (d) Gilgit or the land of Dards (e) Mirpur-Poonch-Muzaffarabad (f) Valley of Kashmir. about thirteen languages and dialects are spoken in this area, chief being Dogri, Kashmiri, Pahari, Ladakhi and Dardi. The ancient script of Dogri was Takri and of Kashmiri Sharad. Kashmir shared fame as an important seat of learning and culture with Nalanda and Taxila. Kashmiri literature combines in itself Persian and Sanskrit traditions and Islamic and Hindu philosophies. A Sanskrit inscription on a tomb in the Cemetery of Baha-ud-Din put up during the reign of Sultan Mohammad Shah in 1484 indicates that both Sanskrit and Persian were in use. A birch bark document in Sharda and Persian characters pertaining to Sheikh Makhdom Hamza, a Muslim saint of Kashmir, about 500 years old, reflects the Kashmiri's catholicism of outlook.

The earliest specimen of Kashmiri literature is *Mahayney*
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Prakash of Rajnakesiti Kanthe. Lala Ded who lived in the 14th century A.D. expressed herself as a link between the classical Sanskrit traditions of the past and the Persian poetic patterns of later period. Munshi Bhawani Dass Kachroo was as great a Persian writer as Mohammad Tabir Ganj. Jangnama by Taba Ram Turki stands on the same footing as Shahnama of Firdous. Rajkaul Arzbeg's diary and Rajkak Dhar's Farrukh have a place in local literature. Persian tales of "Farhad and Shirin" and "Yusuf and Zulaikha" did inspire folklore but love-lyrics of "Bumbru and Lolare", "Himal and Nagrai" and "Bulbul and Myna" are very rich synthesis of romantic fancy and legend, purely indigenous. Gulrez of Pir Maqbool Shah Kralwari, Shahnama of Wahab Parey and Sudama Charita of Parmanand are also notable. Among the modern writers are Abdul Ahad Azad, Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor, Ghulam Hassan Arif, Dina Nath Nadim, Noor Mohammad Rosha, Ali Mohammad Lone, Amin Kamil, Shamim-Ahmad Shamin and Master Zinda Kaul. They do not only inspire but make the language. Lala Ded represents Kashmiri language and religious system of the fourteenth century influenced by Islamic thought and culture. Her spiritual preceptor was Sidh Bey. She became a devout follower of Trika philosophy. Besides she mastered Shat-chakras. Her poetry denounces rituals and welcomes all castes and creeds. Hindu sadhus and sanyasis influenced Muslim masses as much as did Muslim sheikhs and pirs Hindu masses. The product of this cultural fusion was Nur-ud-Din (Sahajanand) of Tsrar Sharif popularly known as Nund Rishi. Lala Ded and Sheikh Nur-ud-Din were followed by Haba Khatun and Urinimal, famous for localistics. Nearly two centuries after Haba Khatun came Urinimal, on the literary scene. There is more of pathos and tragedy in her songs.

The mystic and philosophic note is missing from the modern Kashmiri literature which opens with a fresh and free outlook on national and cultural life. This is represented by Mahjoor and Azad. The latter was inspired by Rasool Mir. He expressed himself against injustice intolerance and suppression. Side by side Daya Ram Ganjoo and Masterji strike a different note. Asad Ullah Mir, Lachman Bhat Nagam, Nand Lal Ambardar and

Abdul Wahab Hajin belong to the early phase of modern Kashmiri poetry. Abdul Sattar Gujri Aasi is a proletarian poet. He was sentenced to three months' imprisonment in "Quit Kashmir" movement for his poem 'Siasi Qaidi'. Dina Nath Nadim gives a socialistic message. Roshan's Ashq and Zutshi's Vijwan attracted attention.

Folk tales have their own place in literature. Folk music is traced to tenth century. Chhakri came from Afghanistan about 400 years ago. Soofiana Mausiqi came from Iran and has come down from man to man (unwritten). There are references that music had attained perfection in the time of Jaloka whose queen also danced. "Zohra Khatun and Haya Band", Gulala Shah, Wazirma,l Lalmal, Shah Sayar, Sheshman are very well-known. There are also ballads like Sudamacharita, Radha Swoyamvara and Shivalagan. The Kashmiri muse sings through folklore, fresh and chaste. Ruff and Chhakri are the heritage of Kashmir's dynamic past and spirit of beauty around. Harvest season, wedding season, sowing season and long winter nights are occasions of drama and music. Kashmiri music and drama may be traced to books like Sangitaculamani, Swaimatrika and Kutummabalam. Soofina kalam (classical) is derived from Soofism. The instruments accompanying the music are Saz, Santoor, Sitar and Dholak. Whether it is music or poetry, drama or painting, art or architecture, love or romance, the inspiration comes from Kongposh and Pamposh which dance and sing with moon and stars. "Cultural cosmopolitanism and cultural synthesis of the Kashmir literary tradition may be traced to the second century A.D. Kashmiri literature characters have synthesized almost all cultural and religious traditions of India as manifested by Kashmiri poetry. The synthesis left an impact on contemporary Kashmiri thinking and living where various religious practices were mingled. The literary tradition of Kashmir was best represented in and described by two mythical images which were generally believed to have found currency in the fifth century A.D. One of them particularly reflected the relationship between Kashmir and the rest of the Indian mainland in an image (not statue-of Vishnu on a lotus flower). In this particular image India is depicted by the body and Kashmir by

the halo. Identical images have been found in the Nilgiris. Among the first notable work on Kashmir is Kalhana's *Rajtarangini*, a factual and unpretentious account of conditions in Kashmir during his time in which the author has explained the reason for ready absorption of cultures and religious traditions in Kashmir when in his references to Buddhism he proclaimed- we are not to argue with Buddhists. We are not to argue with those who differ from us. Roughly in fourteenth century Ismaili philosophy made its appearance in Kashmir following the Muslim invasion. The Kashmiris, according to the chronicler Balakshah, rejoiced in the return of a mystic system to their tradition. It was not till the 13th century, however, that a truly Kashmiri literature arose with the legendary poetess-Lalla Rifa. Her poems are still recited in all parts of Kashmir and retained their original freshness and surprisingly enough had retained their original forms despite the fact that they had been recited by professional Muslim minstrels for over 500 years. Some original texts reveal that even archaic forms of expression were retained. Kashmir Advaita Shaivism influenced Ismaili literature in Badakhshan, whether or not Shaiva Manuscripts followed or preceded a Kashmir invasion of the immediate west. Advaita Shava texts and Persian Ismaili texts of Badakhshan could provide much material".

—(Nila Cram Crook).

Under the auspices of the State Academy of Arts and Culture a Kashmiri dictionary in Persian script was attempted claiming larger collection of words than Grierson's which was based on the material collected by Ishwar Kaul, a well known scholar. The first grammar of the Kashmiri language was published in 1886 by Rev : T.R. Wade. History of Kashmiri literature by Abdul Ahad Azad was compiled in three volumes. Translation of 'Nilamatpurana' by Dr. Ked Ghai is a valuable contribution. Jagan Nath Sheopuri's and Abdul Aziz's note book on soofiana music will carry forward this type of music which is an off-shoot of Indo-Iranian culture.

Mystics of Kashmir

1. Grata Baba

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2. Sumbali Baba
3. Madrasi Baba
4. Mathra Devi
5. Paltu Shah
6. Akram Saib
7. Lakhman Ji
8. Nand Ram
9. Gupa Joo
10. Hari Ram
11. Mirak Shah
12. Nand Lal
13. Lasa Saib
14. Zaina Machi

They are guarding the spiritual frontiers of Kashmir.

Village Life

The villages of Kashmir are full of human interest as we study the people in their natural environment.

The chief village population is found all round the valley on the higher ground which shelves up to the mountains, on the slopes below the foot-hills, the deltas of the tributary valleys and the sides of the karewahs. Here enormous areas of terraced rice-field are to be found, stretching from the alluvial plain up to the base of the mountains. And as we go a little higher we find whole slopes covered with maize. The flat tops of the karewahs are used especially for wheat, barley, mustard and linseed, early crops which come to maturity before the scorching heat of summer parches the soil.

The life of Kashmir depends upon its agriculturists. The population of the Kashmir Province is 1,295,203 and of these probably more than a million are engaged in agriculture. In olden days the interests of the villagers were largely subordinated to those of the inhabitants of the city of Srinagar, many of

whom were influential and all of whom were more immediately under the eyes of the rulers.

Rice for the city was taken from the villagers at low rates. They were liable to frequent calls for forced labour. Every year they levy of coolies for Gilgit placed in the hands of the Tehsildars (the district magistrates) great powers of oppression. And from the chief of the local administration down to the humblest peon of the Tehsil this was an unfailing source of income. Meanwhile, the poor and friendless, or those who had incurred the wrath of the authorities, were seized and sent off on the hated task to carrying loads a thirteen days' journey, over rough mountain tracks to Gilgit. Their condition was indeed little better than that of slaves.

"In May 1888 I was on cholera duty in Islamabad. Just as the epidemic was reaching its height, and hundreds were dying every day in all the districts around, a levy of 5000 or more coolies was called for. The villagers were almost distracted with fear. Who would do all the agricultural work? What would happen, during their long absence, to their wives and children? To what perils of pestilence and inclemency of weather would they themselves be exposed in the crowded bivouacs and snowy passes of the deadly Gilgit district? I was present at a sort of farewell service on a maidan outside Islamabad, when nearly 1000 men were starting. And when they took leave of the friends who had accompanied them so far, loud was the sobbing of some, fervid the demeanour of all as, led by the mullah, they intoned their prayers and chanted some of their special Ramzan penitential psalms. Braver men might well have been agitated at such a time. It is certain that cholera clung to the camp, and that unburied corpses of hundreds of these poor 'begaris' marked the whole line of march from Srinagar to Bunji."

In the year 1882 the State tried the remarkable experiment of auctioning the villages for revenue purposes. The purchasers in many cases bid amounts which were absurdly greater than the value of the village revenue, and after wringing all they could go out of the unhappy villagers, they absconded without

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paying the State a single rupee. This was bad enough. But to aggravate it the state actually professed to regard the sum offered at the auction as the real value of the village tax, and year by year put pressure upon the unfortunate cultivators with a view to realizing this fictitious revenue!

The great land settlement, initiated by Sir Andrew Wingate in 1887, and carried through by Sir Walter Lawrence from 1889-1895, changed all this, and from that time the condition of the villagers has been one of increasing prosperity. Two among many evidences of this are the large areas of new land being annually brought under cultivation, and the numerous shops, which are springing up in the villages, stocked with cotton piece goods and other luxuries or necessities of civilization.

The abolition of the old method of a special low rate for rice, fixed by Government, was, however, effected too abruptly. It had been going on for generations, and the life of the poorer inhabitants of Srinagar was largely dependent upon cheap food thus obtained. When the market was thrown open in 1902, the price of rice rushed up to more than fourfold, and thousands in the city were threatened by starvation. The Government was compelled to readjust the situation and to make grants to cheaper grain to those who were really poor.

Kashmiri villages are conspicuous in the landscape. There is usually a group of chenar trees, with light grey trunks, mottled with pale yellow, and massive curved limbs, with dense foliage forming dark green masses in summer and brilliant splashes of light red in the late autumn. Close by are two or three lofty poplars and lines of young saplings, bordering orchards of pear, apple and apricot, or market gardens enclosed by wattle fences. Mounds covered with large purple and white irises, brilliant and fragrant in the sunshine, mark the sites of the old village graveyards, and the hamlet itself shows as a collection of large high-pitched, straw-thatched gables, peeping out from among the mulberry trees.

These homesteads embowered in trees are surrounded by thousands of acres of arable land, terraced squares and crescents

of rice-field, irrigated from small channels.

Rice ripens up to an altitude of about 7000 feet. It is the staple crop of Kashmir. There are at least sixty different varieties with distinct names; but there are two broad divisions viz., white and red. The former is considered greatly superior.

The successful cultivation of rice, entails enormous labour. First of all the fields have to be constructed in terraces so as to allow of effective irrigation. Channels have to be dug for the distribution of the water. It is essential, when the rice has been sown or planted out from the nurseries, that the soil shall never again get dry. The weeding alone is a tremenodus task. Rows of peasants may be seen standing in mud and water, bent down, scooping out all the adventitious plants and grasses, and plastering mud round the stalks of the young rice plants. This goes on day after day under a hot sun and the field have to be carefully and completely weeded no less than four times a year. Where, however, the rice plants have been transferred from nurseries, instead of being sown broadcast, twice is sufficient. This speical weeding is called khushaba.

The Kashmiri is an absolute expert in rice cultivation, and unless early frost steps in, continuous rain at harvest-time, or one of the disastrous inundations to which Kashmir is so liable, there is usually a splendid harvest.

Throughout the valley there is very extensive irrigation. The water can be taken off at great heights from the tributary valleys, and there are also a large number of springs. The distribution is very wide and is said to be conducted on a system introduced by the Moghuls.

In and around Srinagar and the larger towns and villages lift irrigation is also carried on largely by means of a long pole acting as a lever and working on a pivot upon a cross-piece resting on two uprights, or on the forked branches of a tree. The short end of the pole carries a large stone as a counterpoise, and on to the long end like the line of a fishing-rod hangs a thick rope with an earthenware bucket attached. This is rapidly lowered into the river or well by pulling on the rope and

dragging down the end of the pole. When this is released the weight of the stone raises the bucket which, as it reaches the level of the ground, is emptied into a long boat-shaped tray of wood which acts like a funnel and conducts the water in the required direction. This form of irrigation is especially useful for market gardens. All the land really belongs to the State. But hereditary rights of occupancy have been granted to cultivators who pay their taxes regularly. They are not, however, allowed under any circumstances to sell or mortgage their land. This rule saves them from the clutches of the Hindu banias and middlemen. And if it is necessary for a villager to raise money, he can usually do it in advance on his standing crops.

A certain number of high officers and privileged persons, such as the Mian Rajputs, the clan of H.H. the Maharajah, hold estates in Kashmir, which are revenue free and not under the control of the Forest Department. These are called jagirs.

Entering the village, we usually find a broad track with grassy borders bounded by a rippling stream. Grateful shade is cast by large walnut trees, the deeply fissured and gnarled trunks of which rise from spreading roots which encroach on the path. Some of these trees have a girth of 18 feet and more. The houses are mostly two stories, and they have a fram work of wood which is filled in with sundried or, in the better houses, with red kiln-baked bricks. Under the thatched roofs in an airy space with stores of grass and firewood, and sometimes silkworms. The eggs of the latter are imported from France and to a less extent from Italy, and about 30,000 ounces are distributed annually to villagers, who place them in the roofs or rooms of their houses and hatch them. The young are then fed on the leaves of the mulberry trees which are so common. The cocoons when ready are purchased by the silk factory. In this way as much as 3,200,000 lbs. may be brought in by the villagers in one year, for which the Department of Sericulture pays over Rs. 600,000 (about 40,000). This goes to about thirty-five thousands villagers, giving them on an average nearly Rs. each, which makes it quite worth their while, as this equivalent to at least two months' wages for an ordinary

Kashmiri cultivator.

Most of the houses have a front verandah to the upper storey in which the people live for the greater part of the year, and at one end of which is a little kitchen with clay fireplace. The inner rooms, chiefly used in winter, are dark and almost unventilated. The ground floor is often set apart entirely for cattle and sheep. If his arrangement secures warmth for the dwellers above, it is at some sacrifice of sweetness. Every village has several granaries, small square wooden buildings, the floor of which is raised a few feet above the ground. And not far away is sure to be a village shrine (Astan) often on an eminence and usually with fine old trees in the vicinity. The Mosque is probably near by, and in its roof may be seen the wooden bier in which the dead are carried to the graveyard to be interred with a coffin. At daybreak and at sunset the voice of the muezzin sounds out, calling the faithful to prayer, and soon a small congregation gathers and the Imam conducts the Namaz. In some mosques the congregation chant their prayers almost in Gregorian style.

Often the sides of the houses are festooned with bright rows of red chillies or split turnips, golden maize cobs and dried apples.

In the courtyard in front of a house we see two women busily engaged in pounding the unhusked rice in a large wooden mortar with pestles 5 feet long. First one straightens herself, lifts the pestle as high as she can, and then bending suddenly brings it down with a crash. Then the other woman facing her does the same. This is perhaps one of the commonest sights in the village. On a stretch of green, there is a row of upright sticks at intervals of 2 feet. These are for weaving purposes. One of the villagers may be seen walking up and down rapidly winding from a spindle a reed of cotton in and out of these stakes. In the verandah an old woman is seated with masses of snow-white cotton-wool in front of her, from which, with the aid of a curious old wheel, she is spinning excellent thread. A peep through the window of another house shows a rough loom in which woollen blankets are woven.

This is one of the staple village industries. A common arrangement is for the local shopkeeper to advance money on the promise of repayment in blankets and garden produce.

According to the Kashmiris there are six seasons in the year, each of two months. "Wandh," with a somewhat similar sound, corresponds to our English winter, or at least with the time from 15th November till 15th January. During this period and on till the end of March, the first ploughing for wheat and barley is done. Then rice, maize and the other autumn crops are thrashed; and when the snow falls towards the end of December the people weave woollen blankets, and attend to their sheep and cattle. "Sont" is the period from 15th March to 1st May. This is an extremely busy time. The fields have to be ploughed and manured for rice and is sown in nurseries, and the seedlings are planted out when they are nearly a foot high. Broadcast sowing gives better crops but entails considerably more labour in weeding. The wheat and barley harvest begins in the valley at the end of May, and during the whole summer the harvest goes on at the various altitudes. Linseed is a little later than wheat. From July to September the peasants are busy in the fields weeding the rice, maize and cotton.

The last is a very pretty crop, with its large yellow flowers followed by snowy tufts. The real harvest of Kashmir comes on the September and October, called by the Kashmiris the season of "Hard." It is then that the rice and maize, millet, sesame, amaranth and other autumn crops are gathered in. And now the fruit trees are laden, and before long from all parts of the valley strings of ponies may be met, and lines of coolies carrying baskets of apples and pears and sacks of walnuts, most of which will find their way to Baramula and be exported from there by cart to the plains of India.

At harvest-time all round the valley, but especially near the fringe of the forest, the villagers are troubled by the depredations of bears. The fields of maize and the fruit on the trees are a great attraction. To guard their crops the people erect "machans"—little roofed platforms twelve to twenty feet above the ground. Here they sit and watch at night and blow trumpets, beat

drums, old kerosene tins, or anything else which will make a noise. And at the same time they emit blood-curdling yells, or piercing whistles, all with the object of terrifying the nocturnal robbers. The combined effect of fifty or a hundred people thus engaged at night over a comparatively small area of cultivated land is somewhat suggestive of pandemonium.

Kashmir is particularly rich in fruit trees. Many of these are indigenous and found wild in the forest. The people are quite clever at grafting. The stock is cut off rather low, and into the end three or four scions are wedged and supported by clay surrounded by birch bark. Ring budding is also successfully practised. In addition to the ordinary fruit trees, currants, raspberries and gooseberries are found wild. Apricots are also common. The fruit has been all immensely improved by cultivation and the introduction of choice varieties.

The grapes are rather disappointing. In the valley, rapid night radiation in the autumn, and the heavy dew, together with the great sun heat in the day, appear to favour blight and other disease. At the mouth of the Sind valley there are some good vineyards producing delicious white and red dessert grapes.

On the east side of the Dal Lake there are about 400 acres of wine grapes, and at the distillery, under M. Peychaud's skilled supervision, wines of the Barsac and Medoc type are produced. The vintage varies much from year to year. It is said that the soil is deficient in iron and phosphates, and that the frequent difficulty in obtaining perfectly ripe grapes affects both the quality and keeping powers of the wine.

Hops grow well in Kashmir. In the summer the growth is very rapid. A market is found for them in breweries.

A large number of sheep are kept by peasants who live in the valley. These all have to be sent up to the hill pastures in the summer to escape the intense heat and get fresh grazing. They are entrusted to shepherds who bring them back again in the autumn and receive two percent of the flock if it is intact. They are also paid in rice and are allowed all the butter made from the sheep's milk.

The cows, which are numerous in the villages, are small, and they usually appear to be half starved. They seldom give more than six pints of milk a day. A cow may be bought for about twenty rupees.

In the sides of some of the houses in the villages we see a circle with a hole in the centre into which bees are seen to be crowding. These are the Kashmir hives.

They are merely earthenware cylinders, about 2 feet long, and built into the wall. The outside end of the hive has a central hole about an inch across, or sometimes a series of small holes in a circle. The inner end has an earthenware lid fitted over it and sealed on with clay. No artificial feeding is done in the summer, but in winter the bees are supplied with food. No special measures are, however, taken to protect them from the cold, and the mortality is often very great. In many villages after a severe winter, when the temperature sometimes falls to zero Fahrenheit, more than three-quarters of the colonies will perish. Under favourable conditions strong colonies are formed. Early in May the swarms issues. One hive may give off as many as six, weighing from two to four pounds each. The villagers usually expect the swarms to settle and hive themselves in one of the numerous empty wall hives. The bees are not accustomed to English hives, and it is extremely difficult to retain them. In many cases it appears advisable to fit a strip of queen excluder zinc across the entrance to prevent the queen from leaving. Usually this can be safely removed after two or three weeks. But I have frequently lost swarms in spite of this precaution. One colony left the hive and deserted its brood two months after it had been introduced. This was, however, due to persistent attacks of bee-robbers. Where Kashmir bees are kept in wooden hives there seems to be an unusual amount of fighting and robbing. The local earthenware hives do not appear to get in. The wooden hives perhaps emit an odour from their joints, for they are pestered by hornets, worried by robbers and sometimes in the spring a swarm will descend upon as already occupied hive.

The Kashmiris understand something of the management

of queens. They sometimes secure a restless queen by tying a fine thread to one of her legs and pinning her to the comb. Sometimes, too, they change queens, and they cut out queen cells quite cleverly.

Two harvests may be obtained, one in June and the other in October. The back of the hive is opened and smoke is blown in, and the combs are rapidly cut out. The bees are gentle, so comparatively few are killed. No proper care is usually taken of brood comb, and insufficient supplies are often left for the survivors. Sulphur is, however, not used.

The bees are wonderfully tame. I have often manipulated them without the use of any subduer. As in Europe, there appear to be two chief varieties—the yellow bee and a darker kind. In the yellow variety there is a fairly broad transverse stripes on the back, with four parallel pale yellow bands below. The ventral surface of the abdomen is yellow, and the thorax is covered with light brown fur. The lowest stripe is a little broader at the middle, which makes the bee look as if it had a white tail. The wings when folded reach to the lower margin of this stripe.

Wild bees appear to be yellower and to have slightly longer bodies than the domesticated varieties. I have seen them as high as 12,000 feet above sea-level. The favourite altitude for wild colonies is between 5500 and 7000 feet. It is too hot for them in the valley in the summer; but all round the hills in the mountain villages they thrive. The forests are full of wild balsams and the slopes are covered with wild sage. So great is the attraction of the mountain and forest flowers that many swarms desert the valley in the spring but return to their village hives again in September.

Both hornets and ants are troublesome enemies. When hornets threaten the hive the bees come out and form compact groups, and as the enemy approaches they lower their heads and, with a peculiar quivering movement, turn their tails with the sting exposed towards the intruder, who usually veers off. Hornets, however, sometimes carry off one or even two bees at a time. Occasionally a bee with bold spirit takes decisive

action. Perhaps, like Sir Nigel Loring, she regards the hornet as a "courteous and worthy person with whom some small bickering may be had." Or possibly, Marcus Curtius like, she seeks, by sacrificing herself, to save the whole community. I have seen a bee suddenly dash out from the armed circle of defenders and pierce a formidable hornet four times her own size, inflicting a fatal wound. But all are not so courageous, for one day I placed a dead hornet on the alighting-board when the sentry had gone in for a moment. A casual bee coming out for an evening walk suddenly and unexpectedly caught sight of the orange-coloured monster, gave a most dramatic start, and then hastened back to her own quarters. Whether she spread the alarming news I know not, but almost at once a fierce and stalwart worker emerged and, single-handed, seized the unwelcome intruder and threw him off the platform. In their behaviour towards ants bees seem rather timid. Ignoring them unless they come quite near, they even then appear to chase them with some apprehension lest the ant should turn and seize them by the nose.

Large ants are the most formidable of all foes. They will sometimes raid a hive like a band of Masai warriors attacking a village. There is a large black variety half an inch long with powerful mandibles, with which they literally cut off the bees' heads. Should an invasion of these occur, the bees will leave the hive, but not before large numbers have been massacred. Fortunately the defence is easy, as it is only necessary to stand the legs of the hive in water.

No one in Kashmir has yet succeeded in getting bees to work properly in the upper sections of a standard frame hive.

It will be interesting to see whether the introduction of English or Italian queens will result in greater industry, or whether their progeny, will succumb to the somewhat enervating influence of the climate and the summer and autumn droughts.

As the autumn draws on in Kashmir the days remain bright and hot, but the cold at nights becomes increasingly intense. Early in September excellent snipe-shooting is to be obtained, and large number of ducks begin to fly over the

valley. On some of the lakes wild waterfowl are very abundant. In 1906 Lord Minto and the Viceregal party shot 1500 duck in one day on the Hukra Jheel. When shooting is going on, the duck rise from the lakes and marshes in clouds and wheel round in tens of thousands, some at a great height.

After the middle of October the leaves rapidly change their colour, Poplars and mulberries become lemon-yellow, chenars a pure light red, and apples and pears orange and crimson. At this season the willow are pollarded and the saplings and leaves stored for winter fodder for the flocks. In the hedges black berries are abundant. In the evenings at this time of the year a blue mist hangs over the valley and round the foot of the mountains, which take on exceedingly rich orange-coloured tints as the sun sets.

In the winter snow usually falls in the third week of December. After that, sometimes for six weeks, the whole country is snow-bound, clouds settle down upon the mountains and there is no sunshine. The cold then becomes very great. Occasionally the Dal Lake is frozen sufficiently to bear. I have on two occasions skated from the distillery at the south end to beyond the Nassim Bagh, 3 miles to the north-west. It is not, however, very safe, as there are warm springs.

Every morning, during the winter, thousands of jackdaws leave the city and fly in dense clouds out into the country in search of food. About five o'clock in the evening they return. In fine weather they fly high. If, however, the weather is threatening, they skim just over the tops of the houses and trees. It is interesting to watch their flight. The whole army appears to be composed of divisions. As they advance, a cloud of scouts is thrown out in front. On reaching the outskirts of the city the front battalions settle on groups of trees in such numbers that the whole tree becomes black and the branches are weighed down. When the rear divisions arrive there is much wheeling and manoeuvering and evidently different clans occupy distinct trees, for which sometimes active skirmishing is carried on. When, however, the last stragglers have arrived, the whole force rises in a dark cloud and makes its way to

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the city, where the night is spent roosting in trees and under the caves of houses.

The valley of Kashmir is remarkably calm. With the exception of thunder storms in the summer and occasional gales early in March, it is extremely rare to have a windy day. The rainfall varies much from year to year. It is usually between twenty-five and thirty-five inches. The heaviest rain is ordinarily towards the end of July, corresponding to the full development of the monsoon in North India, and it is then that there is great danger of floods.

One of the commonest of Kashmir birds in the village is the white-cheeked bulbul. These have a graceful feather crest curving forwards and nearly 2 inches long. They are quite domesticated and often come indoors, perching on tables and chairs or even on the edge of a tea-cup, the sugar at the bottom of which has special attractions for them. With a little trouble they can be taught to catch crumbs thrown in the air, and they will perch on the back of one's hand. Swallows are exceedingly common. They usually arrive in March and build their nests in April and May.

Small game is not nearly so common in Kashmir as might be expected. There are no hares nor wild rabbits in the valley. On the hills the chikor partridge is common. It belongs to the genus of rock or sand partridges, and is found usually above the line of cultivation among the rocks. Covoys are often seen in the fields at harvest-time, and they are met with upto an altitude of 9000 feet. The monai pheasant is the most handsome of all Kashmir birds. The cock is magnificent, with rich peacock-blue plumage with golden-red sheen. These pheasants are not very common. They live chiefly at the upper margins of the forests.

The valley is infested with rats. In the summer they live in the fields and farm yards. In the winter they crowd into the houses and to immense mischief. They would be still more numerous were it not for the large number of half-wild cats which take up their abode in the roofs and basements of the houses and do valuable service. It is an interesting fact that

when Kashmir was attacked by plague there was no evidence of any rat infection.

As we walk through the village we notice the little shop, the tawny-yellow or black dogs stealthily walking about, the flocks of ducks busy gobbling in the stream and the little bathing-houses close by.

Ploughing is done with small bullocks and the ploughs are small, for deep furrows are unnecessary. Rice cultivation is the great interest of most of the inhabitants of the valley. It speaks well for the fertility of Kashmir that although there is only one annual rice crop, in good year excellent rice may be bought at a half penny per pound.

It is in the village that we see the real Kashmir life. The language, dress, complexion, manners and customs of the people are quite distinct from those of any other country. Probably few people have undergone less change in the march of the centuries than this nation, in its isolated valley, separated by gigantic mountain ranges from all the countries around and, until the last quarter of a century, connected with India only by a rough bridle track more than a hundred miles long.

(G. L. Kaul)

*Muslims named it Takhte Suleman. Suleman was the son of King David and Queen Sheba who sat on the royal throne of Ethiopia in 980 B.C. Suleman is the Kashmiri version of Solomon.

How he came to be associated with Kashmir about one thousand years before Christ is a subject for research.

*How Christ's hair exhibited on rare occasions came here is a matter for research. Tradition has it that Christ was buried at Rozabal, Khanyar.

8

The Folklore

It has been mentioned how Somadeva's classic, Katha-Sarita Sagar, became the source material of folk-tales in most Indian languages. Of primary importance to the folklorist, the folk-tale exercises a peculiar charm over people of all ages, in all climes and countries. Kashmir has an inexhaustable fund of folk-tales. They are, as folklorists have it, as old as the rocks. Many of the folk-tales of Kashmir like "Himal and Nagiray", "Zohra Khotan and Haya Bund", "Gulala Shah", etc. are distinctly Kashmiri in origin. (Among these, "Himal and Nagiray" has been rendered into Kashmiri and persian verse). Others, which constitute the large majority, are variants of popular tales of the East and the West.

Common Denominator

It is interesting to underline points common to folk-tales of Kashmir and the rest of the world. The demon or the lion or tigress, giving a tuft of hair or some such token to the ingratiating hero, to whom it serves as a useful charm, is a device common to eastern (including Kashmiri and other Indian) and western tales. The charming ring of Alladin has many interesting variants in folk-tales of Kashmir. Besides, there are legends of man-eating monsters in every country, whom the hero kills by ingenious means. these cannibal demons or vampires, for that

matter, might have been a species of some mythical animal, whose fear universally persisted in the common man. The less awesome creature like Makara_half bird, half crocodile-was given other forms like half antelope and half fish, as the myth spread from India, influencing people's lore and arts as far removed as Java, Mongolia and China. The popular heroes, semi-historical or otherwise, who destroyed these terrors, won applause from the folk the world over. Appollo killed python. Hercules was the dragon-slayer. So were Beowulf and the heroes of "Percy's Reliques", in England, and Thor in Scandinavia. Variants of these legendary figures, woven into interesting stories, are to be found in Dravidian, German, Turkish, Tibetan and Kashmiri tales. The common denominator is an exotic admixture of the miraculous and the familiar, the myth and the reality. The hearer is transported into a new world, suspended between the known and an Utopia.

In Zohra Khotan and Haya Bund, is a purely Kashmiri tale, Zohra Khotan-pursued relentlessly by a rich tyrant of a merchant-collects earth, shapes it into her own head. God grants her prayer, to preserve her chastity. to clay changes into Zohra's head, dripping with blood. "Take this," she tells the soldier, "and give it to the merchant." The soldier departs with the head. This anecdote is typically Kashmiri, where occultism has deep roots. A combination of mystic and sorcerous factors have subscribed in good measure to determine the ethos of the folk life.

The Hatim or Harishchandra type of king, whose charity is unflagging even in the most trying circumstances, occurs in Kashmiri as in many Indian and a number of Asian tales. Through their poet-historian, Kalhana, Kashmiris know about and have stories about Vinaditya, the saint-king, of Kashmir, who lived on the produce of his own farming. Then there are the exploits of the mythical hero, who has the ability to transform himself into anything in the natural or the supernatural world. These have a familiar ring to the readers of the Arabian Nights and epics of the Hindus as well as Katha-Sagar. Monsters of different varieties, vampires, ghosts and gobline occur in Somadeva's stories. Self-transformation is the essential theme

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of the 'swan-maiden stories in Katha-Sarita-Sagar. In other Kashmiri, as in Asian tales, the protagonist dons a cap to make himself invisible to execute his plans. Naga or snake-also means'spring' in Kashmiri-is peculiar to Kashmiri and Bengali tales. The wife of Kashyapa-after whom, according to legend, Kashmir is named, Kashyapa-Mir, 'the land of Kashyapa'-was the mother of Nagas, who peopled Patala, the region below the earth. The lover of Himal (in the representative Kashmiri folktale, Himal and Nagiray) is Nagiray, the serpent-monarch, who assumed human form on the earth, but was otherwise a snake in his spring. (A spring near Pampur, a village near Srinagar, famous for saffron field, is still attributed to Nagiray).

Delightful replicas of Shabrang, Prince-Thief of Kashmir, are to be found in Norse, Dravidian and Chinese tales. (Many a Kashmiri tale has the pleasant spontaneity of Norse tales). Ashraf of the Punjab folk-tale is a near echo of Saraf of Kashmir. The robber of 'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves' of the Arabian Nights has parallels in many Kashmiri and other Indian tales. Thieves, cut-throats, harlots and opium-addicts abound in the stories of Katha-Sarita-Sagar. to come to recent times, intriguing stories of thieves like Laiq Tsur and his famous 'pupil'. Mahadev Bhishta-the 'Robinhood of Kashmir'-are current in village and urban homes of Kashmir.

The prose of Kashmiri folk-tales is picturequely colloquial. Nature's bountiful charms of the "Vale of Cashmere" add not a little to the beauty of the figure and the aptness of the diction. The faithfulness of the folk to the narrative is striking. It is largely the rural folk, young and old, who have preserved these treasures of the literature of the people in a mostly undiluted form. An old peasant, narrative a folk-tale, often interperses it with fragments of narrative poetry which render the telling more effective.

In the Elysian habitat of Kashmir, with its abundant beauties of nature and man, it was but natural for some un-known folk-bard to have started the vogue of folk-songs, that was destined to become immortal.

Folk-songs in Kashmir as elsewhere, show, and to some

extent, preserve the myths, customs, traditions and ways of life of bygone days. The songs and tunes are as compelling in their appeal as other forms of verbal folk arts, folk-tales and proverbs. The beliefs and manners of Kashmiris are worthily embalmed in their folk-songs, which also mirror the chequered national history of the 'Valley. folk verse also perpetuates the memory of calamities like floods and famines, foreign invasions, tyranny of rulers, etc. the songs correspond to the description of folk-songs of Paul Afargue, the Russian poet: "The folk-song is the tune, original and natural expression of the people's soul, its companion in joy and sorrow, the encyclopaedia of its religion, the philosophy, the treasure-house to which it commits its faith, its family and national history." The folk-songs is, of course, part of folk culture, which is distinct from that of cities.

Variety

Kashmiri folk-songs are current in almost every Kashmiri home, particularly in the rural areas. the songs present considerable variety in theme, content and form. The broad classification of the songs is: (1) Love songs (Lol-givun), (2) Ruf dance songs, (3) Pastoral songs, (4) Boatmen's songs, (5) Spring songs (sont gevun), (6) Harvest songs (Lon-nuk geven), (7) Childress's sporting songs (Gindan Gevun), (8) Wedding songs (Vanvun), (9) Sacred Thread ceremony songs (Yagnopavit gevun), (10) Semi-mystic songs (current among the village holy men), (11) Opera songs (Band Jashan), (12) Dancer's songs (Bach Nagma Jashan), (13) Ballads (called Bath or Kath, literally meaningstories), (14) Cradle songs, lullaby, nursery rhymes (called Lalavun, meaning, to lull), and (15) Dirges (Van).

Besides the boatmen's songs, mentioned already, there are songs galore sung to the accompaniment of certain occupations. Seed-sowers, harvesters, embroiderers, papier-mache makers, saffron reapes, shepherds, village belles fetching water, grinding, spinning yarn, or stacking paddy, or labourers doing the chores, sing their different occupational folk-songs in chorus.

Yet others are sung as lullabies or cradle-songs, or at the birth and the naming of a child or at its circumcision (in the

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case of Muslims) or the 'sacred thread' (Hindu) ceremonies. Then there are wedding songs sung in chorus by women at and before a marriage ceremony. Dirges, known as Van are recited in chorus by women of the family after the death of old persons. Variegated beauties of natural that surround the countryside form the theme of many a folk-song. Practically nothing is beyond the scope of the vehicle rendering of the rustic Muse, from subtle, philosophical thoughts to the romance and tragedy of love.

An important ingredient of folk culture, the folk-song may have diction, content and tone that differentiate it from the city product. Yet each form of song is suited to its theme, be it light, serious or any other. In most love songs, the woman offers her heart-the plaints and the outpourings of an unfathomable, jilted heart. Unlike the Dogra or Rajput heroines, the Kashmiri heroine is mostly the spirit of love and beauty, rarely the mother of heroes. There are no songs about the lives of the brave queens, Didda or Kuta Rani, who saved the country in their respective times. The folk-songs thus mostly speak of the moods of love, marriage and other family occasions, the beauty of the seasons or the Elysian environment of the Valley. And, generally, they are racy, rhythmic and vivacious-latterly, justly popularised by the TV all over India. the exquisite singing quality of the songs is often appreciated by the visitor-even though his ear may not be attuned to the Kashmiri language-he hears the village belles, harvesters, craftsmen, boatmen or children recite them in happy chorus.

Many Themes

The predominant theme of folk-songs is a woman's touching plaint about her strayed lover who has deserted her. A typical love song is:

O, you must tell me,
Where my boy has gone.
Is he a fountain in life's garden,
Or, a well of nectar, sweet and delicious?

Spring is the colourful season when fruit trees look resplendent in their variegated blossoms and the shepherd girl

addresses the Marg (a mountain meadow):

Far off forests have all blossomed forth,
Hast thou not heard of me, my love?

Mountain lakes like Tar Sar are full of flowers, Hast thou not heard of me, my love?

These are but excerpts from romantic love-songs, replete with beautiful imagery, invoked by the folk bard from the lovely environs of the 'Paradise of the Indies'. The imagination of the folk bard rises to poetic heights in cradle songs. The peasant mother, comparing the apple of her eye to her loved ear-ring, recites:

I rock thee, my ear-ring, I rock thee,
Thou are the God of Love at evening,
And the sun at early morning,
I rock thee, my ear-ring, I rock thee.

Rural women, plying the spinning wheel, sweetly hum songs such as:

On my mat in my home is perched my spinning wheel,
I wheel it and we gave threads out of it.

The serpentine and calm flowing river of the Happy Valley, the Jhelum, forms the just theme of the songs, like:

O thou slow-motioned Jhelum;
For thee, let me devote my all, O Jhelum!
How great is thy stateliess!
For thee, let me devote my all, O Jhelum!

The peasant women sing praises of the majestic tree of Kashmir, the Chinar, whose beautiful leaf recurs in the lovely motifs of the Valley's manifold art products:

To me, O Chinar, leaf, my love has sent thee,
My all, O Cupid, shall I sacrifice for thee,
Thou, art, Chinar leaf, a prince of beauty,
My all, O Cupid, shall I sacrifice for thee.

Saffron of Kashmir is well-known in song and legend. the saffron fields of Pampore, in the vicinity of Srinagar, are famous. While picking the saffron flowers, peasants-men and women-

sing:

Towards pampore went away my darling,
Saffron flowers caught him in fragrant embrace.
O, he is there, and ah me! I am here,
When, where, O God, would I see his face?

The labouring folk enjoy the loved product of their toil,
but soon the usufruct goes to the contractor's store, and they
feel the poignant separation of the enchanting flower:

How pink is saffron's colour;
Collecting it into heaps we are bathed in sweat,
Soon, too soon, it will be hurried to the city,
Enjoy, its glorious view, O Samad,
How pink is saffron's colour!

The touching refrain of the song is reminiscent of the
wonderful view of the saffron blossom which is enthralling in
full moon or at sunrise or sunset.

Saffron-pilferers, actual or aspirant, lustily shout the humorous
doggerel:

At pampore are the saffron fields,
Bare-footed I shall steal saffron;
My pir lives at Vijibrar,
Why should I run there?

The incomparable beauty of the saffron flower excites the
folk-bard to sing the village belle's conceit:

Proud of thyself art thou,
O saffron flower!
Far lovelier than thee am I'
O saffron flower!
Of Wedding, etc.

The wedding songs (Vanvun) are sung by Muslim and
Hindu women in villages, and towns, but there are differences
between the two in diction, etc. the Muslim songs are weighted
with Persian words, whereas those of the Hindus have some
Sanskrit vocabulary and the tunes recall Vedic chants, which
is specially true of the Yagnopavit (sacred thread ceremony)

and Hindu wedding songs. The dirges (Van) of Hindus and Muslims-again, sung by women-present similar differences of diction and style.

In a Muslim wedding song, the bridegroom's mother lead the chorus:

Your pretty damsels, stay here tonight,
O do sing in honour of the Sultan of India,
His wife's people claim him as their own,
But I shall decorate his bed with mica.

The beauty of the bride is sung by the rustic muse in befitting terms:

Our belle is robed in muslin,
O maid! who has dressed you?
Your teeth are so many pearls,
Who has delved them from the sea?
You are a dealer in gems,
O maid! who has dressed you?

In another marriage song, the bride's mother welcomes the bridegroom:

Live long, O groom, live long,
O come up our stairs,
I shall adorn thy word with the lotus,
O come up our stairs.

Whereas the apricot is the symbol of the bride, the rose is the emblem of the bridegroom in a wedding song which is at the same time a prayer:

May this rose blossom forth, O God!
And may this blessed streamlet run on, O God!

The Barat (marriage Procession) invites analogies with royal occasions:

This Durbar (family) is blessed for the first,
Today the Sarkar (i.e., the bride's father) await the Barat,
He hardly believes his eyes,
God has blessed him.

The Muslim girl, about to sign the Nikah (marriage contract)

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is told to be "wary" to "what is written down," and she is advisedd:

Pampered child give up pranks now,
You are our houri,
But, as daughter, you are another's property.

The birth of a son is an occasion that calls for festivities and songs among the Hindus and Muslims. Joyous songs recall the Hindu mother's travails, culminating in the happy event :

To beget you, I observed fasts on Chaturdashis and Sundays,
Suffering tribulations, I bore you for eight months,
In the ninth month was born my darling;
I called you Barkhordar (the filial one),
Greetings poured in from all aides,
And we started feasting everybody;

On the third day, I roasted 20 kilos of linseed in butter and fruit,

And sent presents and greetings to my parents.
What delicacies didn't I cook?
For you I procured lovely clothiers,
And gave alms to Brahmins and astrologers.

The Muslim song, celebrating the birth of a son, runs thematically on the same lines, except that the Chaturdashi (14th day of the lunar fortnight) fast and Brahmins are not mentioned, and the conclusion is different:

When you were born, I thanked Allah,
I whispered the secret of Islam in your ears,
And named you Diljab (darling).

The Mundan (a child's first hair cutting) ceremony is the occasion for songs in which the child is idolised and adored:

We will crop your hair with a golden razor,
King of Misr (Egypt), I sacrifice myself for thee,
We will load you with precious jewels,
And bedeck your (hairless) chin with pearls.

Romantic ballads, originally sung by the peasantry, and

passed on by word of mouth, have had and continue to have universal appeal among the Kashmiri folk. Many lines from these are on the lips of villagers. they sing the highly contemplative lines from Shirin Khusroo balled:

Maddened by bewitching Shirin,
Khusroo went to world prove faithful?
Alas, who killed you, you lost one?

The legendary lovers Himal and Nagiray, the typical folktale of Kashmir, are recalled in a wedding song, the couple compared to them:

Nagiray will take is seat on the golden carpet,
And take away Himal in the jewelled palanquin.

Or, the bridegroom may be addressed effusively, the Nagiray analogy kept up affectionately:

The rose has bloomed in the spring,
Darling, who led you over here?
Nagiray has come for Himal,
Waving your tuft, you enter our gate,

Which way did you come. Bombur (bee), for the rose? I will swing you in the cradle,

I have illuminated the house for you,
And bedecked Himal for you.

Ruf (or, dance) songs are delightful to watch and hear when groups of girls or women stand in rows, facing each other. Interlinking their arms round each other's waist, they move forwards and backwards, giving themselves a heaving motion. they may recite only a couplet in chorus, like:

Awake, awake, O sweet hyacinth,
Come on, let us dance, O sweet hyacinth!

Dirges are sung by women in chorus after the death of a fairly old person in the family. the poignant humour of a dirge can be telling as in:

The Hakim came and came, the patient (seemingly) improved,

The pyre well be made from sandal wood.

There is a rich variety of pastoral songs which are simple and chaste, and acquire a singular charm when sung in chorus by village belles during the harvesting season, when nature is replete with her bounties. Folklorists divide pastoral songs of Kashmir into two categories-those sung in Kashmiri by the shepherds of Kashmir, and the ones recited by Gujjars in their own dialect. The bounties of the spring and the mountain meadows in blossom are the favourite topics of the pastoral songs. Cowboys and shepherdesses-whether Kashmiris of the Valley or Gujjars tending their flocks in upland meadows-returning with their herds in the evening, also sing these songs, singly or in chorus.

The unique characteristic of intricate vowel sounds coupled with liquid consonants of the Kashmiri language is reflected in its folk-songs, rendering them sweet in tone and alliterative in form. The simplicity of the theme of the folk-songs is matched by the imaginative poetic fervour, and no definite verse forms have hampered the inspiration of the poet of the people.

The Himalayan Muse sings through the folk-songs of Kashmir, fresh, lucid and chaste, and rich in rhythm and vitality.

The tender-footed Kashmiri belles, singing the dance-songs at harvest time or on festive occasions, and dancing the Ruf in rhythmic movement with inter-locked arms, evince the physical expression of the inner response of Kashmiris to the joy and beauty of nature around them. In their dance and song, as well as in the folk-tales, are thus embodied the heritage of Kashmir's dynamic though chequered past and the spirit of beauty vibrating through the sublime and the variegated, bountiful aspects of the Himalayan mountain and meadow.

Kashmiri, the vernacular of Kashmir, has descended from Sanskrit. Actually Kashmiri is a very old language. During Muslim rule, it was enriched by Persian diction, and later on, in the modern period, Urdu and Hindi have been influencing it considerably. Kashmiri has had a rich literature. It yet lives in its songs, the folk-songs, which form a veritable "literature of the people" of Kashmir. In the Golden Valley, with its abundant

beauties of nature and man, it was but natural for some unknown hoary folk-bard to have started the immortal vogue of folk-songs.

Folk-songs in Kashmir preserve the myths, customs, traditions and legends of bygone days. thanks to Sir George Grierson, Sir SAurel Sein, Rev. J. Hinton, Knowles, and Prof. Devendra Satyarthi, Kashmiri folklore has been revived. The songs are current in every rural home in Kashmir. Rural itinerant minstrels usually carry a Dahra, an iron rod with loose iron rings on it, and when they sing folk-songs, they shake the rings skilfully up and down so as to produce a pleasing jingle. These minstrels have mostly passed on the flok-songs by word of mouth down through the ages.

Kashmiri folk-songs present considerable variety in theme, content and form. They can be broadly classified into opera and dancing songs, pastoral lore, romantic ballads, play-songs, semi-mystical songs etc. Then there are other songs sung during particular seasons or in accompaniment to certain occupations. Boatmen, labourers, seed-sowers, harvesters, embroiders, papier-mache makers, milk-men, saffron reapers, shepherds, village belles fetching water, grinding, stacking or weeding paddy, sing their different melodious folk-songs, or at the birth and the naming of a child or at its circumcision or sacred thread ceremonies. Then there are wedding songs sung in chorus by women at and before marriage ceremonies. Dirges, popularly known as Van, are sung in chorus by the women after the death of old persons in the family.

The predominant theme of folk-songs is a woman's touching plaint about her strayed lover who has deserted her. Here is a typical love song:

"O, you, must tell me
Where my boy has gone.
Is he a fountain in life's garden,
Or, a well of nectar, sweet and delicious?"

The last two lines evince the power of exquisite imagery of the unknown folk-bard. These love songs are chaste, simple and pathetic. The lovesick maiden consoles herself in these

words:

“My love is out to tend his goats,
And he must be weaving a garland there;
A garland of fresh, dewy, sosan flowers,
For me, ye maiden.”

The serpentine and calmly flowing river of the Valley, the Jhelum, forms the just theme of folk-songs:

“O thou slow-motioned Jhelum!
For thee, let me devote my all, O Jhelum!
How great is thy stateliness!
For thee, let me devote my all, O Jhelum!

Kashmiri peasant women sing praises of the majestic and beautiful tree of Kashmir-the chinar. the beauty of its leaf is thus sung:

“To me, O chinar leaf, my love has sent thee,
My all, O cupid shall I sacrifice for thee.
Thou art, O chinar leaf, a prince of beauty,
My all, O Cupid shall I sacrifice for thee.”

Saffron is one of the most beautiful products of Kashmir. Saffron fields of Pampur, at a distance of 8 miles from Srinagar, are famous. Peasants, both men and women, sing exquisite folk-songs while picking saffron flowers. A part of a love song is:

Towards pampur went away my darling,
Saffron flowers caught him in fragrant embrace,
‘O, he is there and ah me! I’m here
When, where, O God, would I see his face?
A village girl may sing a conceit in sweet tones;
“Proud of thyself art thou,
O saffron flower!
Far lovelier than thee am I.
O saffron flower!”

The labouring folk hardly enjoy the loved product of their labour of its usufruct, which goes to the contractor’s store and they feel the poignant separation of the enchanting flower, as they express in :

"How pink is saffron's colour!
 Collecting it into heaps we are bathed in sweat,
 Soon, too soon, it will be hurried to the city.
 Enjoy its glorious view, O Samad,
 How pink is saffron's colour!"

The touching refrain of the song is reminiscent of the wonderful view of the saffron blossom which is especially charming in full moon or at sunrise or sunset.

Saffron-pilferers, actual or aspirant, lustily shout the humorous doggerel:

"At Pampore are the saffron fields,
 Bare-footed I shall steal saffron;
 My Pir lives at Vijibrar,
 Why should I run there?"

Though the poor Kashmiri peasants may not afford to use the shawl, Kashmir's world-famous product of art, but they spin its wool and love its beauty. the bride happily sings:

"Shawl-wool shall I spin with my own hands,
 And shall get it dyed in saffron colour."

In a wedding-song the bridegroom's mother leads the chorus;

"you pretty damsels, stay here to-night,
 Oh! do sing in honour of the Sultan of India.
 His wife's people claim him as their own,
 And I shall decorate his bed with mica."

The marriage ceremony is preceded by the so-called "Henna Night", when the hands and feet of the bride and bridegroom are dyed in henna, while women sing chorus songs far into the night:

"We congratulate you on your 'Henna night',
 You have been blessed with God's mercy.
 May you be safe from danger and accidents,
 May god remove your difficulties."

The beauty of the bride is fitly sung by the rustic muse in such songs :

"Our belle is robed in muslin,
Oh maid! who has dressed you?
Your teeth are so many pearls,
Who has delved them from the sea?"
The bride's mother and her relatives sing
"Live long, O groom live long,
O come up by our stairs.
I will adorn thy sword with the lotus,
O come up by our stairs."

The rose is the emblem of the bridegroom in another wedding prayer:

"May this rose blossom forth, O. God!
And may this streamlet of blessing run on, O God!"

Spring is the season, when fruit trees look resplendent in their variegated blossoms and the shepherd girl addresses, the Marg, a meadow:

"Far-off forests have all blossomed forth,
Hast not thou heard of me, my Love?
Mountain lakes like Tar Sar are all full of flowers,
Hast not thou heard of me, my Love?"

Not unfrequently do rural women work at the spinning-wheel. To the accompaniment of this simple occupation, they sweetly hum songs, such as:

"On my mat in my home is perched my spinning-wheel,
I wheel it and neave threads out of it.

The imagination of the folk rises to poetic heights in the cradle songs. The peasant mother, comparing her darling to her ear-ring, her loved ornament, sings:

"I rock thee, my ear-ring, I rock thee,
Thou art the God of Love at evening,
And the sun at early morning,
I rock thee, my ear-ring, I rock thee."

All these kinds of folk-lore contain the essentials of folk songs in that they have been verbally communicated from one generation of ~~country and pastoral bands~~, minstrels and the Foundation, Chandigarh

peasantry in general, to the other generation, and that they are sung at labour, dance, play or traditional ceremonies or craft-occupations. The unique characteristic of intricate vowel sounds coupled with liquid consonants of the Kashmiri language is reflected in its folk-songs, rendering them sweet in tone and alliterative in form. the simplicity of theme and content of folk-songs is matched by their imaginative, poetic fervour. No definite verse-forms have hampered the poetic inspirations of the rustic Muse. The exquisite singing quality of the folk-songs is appreciated by even the ear of the foreigner.

Romantic ballads, originally sung by the peasantry, and passed on verbally, continue to have universal appeal among the Kashmiri folk. Many a line from folk-tales are on the lips of villagers. They sing the highly contemplative lines from Shirin Khusroo:

"Maddened by bewitching Shirin,
Khusroo went to batter the mountain.
To whom did this world prove faithful?
Alas, who killed you, you lost one?"

In a wedding-song, the new couple may be compared to the legendary lovers, Himal and Nagrai thus:

"Nagrai will take him on the golden carpet
And shall take away Himal in the pearly palanquin!"

Dirges are sung by women in chorus after the death of fairly old persons in the family. Their poignant humour is touching as in:

"The Hakim came and came, the patient (seemingly)
improved,

The pyre will be made of sandal wood."

Ruph or Dance Songs are delightful to hear when groups of girls or women stand in lines, interlocking their arms round each other's waist and heave forwards and backwards, giving themselves a wavy motion. They will sing only a couplet in chorus, for instance:

"Seskr, seskr, O sweet hyacinth,

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Come on let us dance, O sweet hyacinth."

This couplet is melodiously repeated over and over again-producing an excellent effect of rhythm.

The peasant-day folk-lore had not substantially added to the past, rich folk-lore of Kashmir. Like most folk-lore it is not high in point of prosody, but, what matters is, that it is spontaneous and through it vibrates the very life of the masses of Kashmir, whose simple habits, bygone customs, loved traditions and past and present agrarian life are fitly mirrored in it. It throws open vast fields of activity for sustained research, so that it may be preserved, revived and rendered dynamic.

III

FOLK SONGS

Dogri Folk Songs

The Dogra is strongly attached to his 'lovely Dogra land'. Many of the Dogri songs are replete with romantic descriptions of nature and man, like the following popular folk-songs:

Behold our lovely Dogra land,
O friend, behold our glorious land!
Groups of lion-hearted men,
And women, the very incarnation of Durga and Chandi,
Behold our glorious land!
Colourful country of green ranges, joy and happiness.
The lovely hills of Chamba and Bhales,
Behold our glorious land!
Beautiful girls, growing to maturity like the waking moon,
Fed on the nectar of springs and streamlets,
Behold our glorious land!
Twisting streams,
Rippling like serpents in the embrace of towering mountains,
And the milky Tawi,
Flowing down with serpentine bends,
Behold our glorious land!
Exquisite lakes, of Mansar and Sanasar.

Behold in every home,
 Maidens of beauty like the full moon;
 For centuries bards and minstrels have sung
 Praises of our glorious Dogra land!

A lover who is indifferent to love as well as the people's martial tradition is aroused to action in a song, whose poignancy (of rejected love) and rhythmic grace can match with the best English love lyric. Here is the translation of the lyric whose touching refrain is O maria Patliao manuan (O my tender, tender love)-

O my tender, tender love.
 Whater has been said or done
 To make you angry with one
 Who can reconcile and is won,
 O my tender tender Love?
 Sweet unrest and sleepless vigils,
 Desires that did not take up cudgels,
 To me your charming words are puzzles,
 O my tender, tender Love.
 Sweet suchian served with a delicious dish
 But at lunch time you to Mandi rush;
 Can you imagine how my tears gush,
 O my tender, tender Love?
 Lazily lie your sword and shield
 And armour hangs on the peg unappealed,
 Even war-bombs fail to fly you to the field,
 O my tender, tender Love

(Suchian, served in the kitchen, is balanced with the heroic story of the Mandi and its heroic denizens to excite the inert lover.)

KISHWARI FOLK-SONGS

A Mystic Song

A Mystic song
 A person comes alone and goes alone,
 What kind of scene turns you on?
 The blowing of the wind bends flower trees,
 But stronger word destroys the whole thing.

Stones, earth and wooden beams collected,
The mason is engaged to construct the house.
One could spend so much that one loses count,

Even after that the builder is burnt on a few planks of wood.

Laughing, playing, some dancing and singing,
Death, shedding tears, nobody asks, nobody listens.
Whatever God ordains shall happen,
Not even a scratch takes place without His will.

A Folk ghazal

Who consumes whose bounty,
Depends on each one's luck.
Whatever you do makes your Destiny,
The good do good and the evil do wrongs.
Some live whimpering and grumbling,
Others have a smooth sailing in life.
One may have observed things of the earth,
But who has seen anything that is beyond?
The broad-minded give away things freely,
The non-givers frighten away the supplicants,
The young or old succumb to death,
Just as autumn` glitter fades and water extinguishes fire.
All alone you have come, all alone you go,
Guest of two days, you reap what you have sown.

'My Own Land'

Beautiful Kishtwar, you are my country,
Saffron fields crown you, my own land.
River Chenab washes your feet everyday,
Mountain peak, called Nagin Sheru,
Keeps you cool, my own land.
Beautiful Kishtwar, you are my country!
The world accepts you as the crown,
So many kings ruled this land,
And held resplendent court.
Beautiful Kishtwar, you are my country!
When there were communal riots all around,

You stood out as a beacon,
An emblem of communal harmony.
Beautiful Kishtwar, you are my country!
At dawn I adore your landscape,
A land with a lovely waterfall like putinag,
I sacrifice myself at your feet.
Beautiful Kishtwar, you are my country!

A Love Lyric

I cannot imagine who has complained against me,
Ill will has been created all over,
My people speaking against me,
I have lost my slumber and my peace of mind.
I cannot tolerate your separation any more,
I feel as if my eyes are overwhelmed,
By an eclipse darker than any,
It looks as if sparks are flashing out of my head.
I have never hidden my deep love for you,
Day and night I am immersed in your thoughts,
I offer my heart to you,
I dedicate my wholeself to you and you alone.
It just occurred to me, I feel your presence,
We will walk together,
My wishes will come true.
If you will stay for some time only.
You partly showed me your face and hid it,
You give a patient hearing to my love songs,
Let me have a view of your beautiful face,
So that I feel the intoxication of wine!

Patriotic Song

We are Hindustanis and Hindustan is ours,
We were born and grew up here,
It kindles the star of peace,
Smiling faces, twisted moustaches, proud eyebrows.
Hindus, Kashmiris, Sikhs, are blended with one another.
We embrace each other,
And the enemy gets jealous.
Temples, mosques, churches have songs of their own.

Pat the back of these Jawans who sacrificed their lives.
Who went to gallows, smiles on their face.
Suffering hardships they never uttered a word,

At last the red monkeys (the British) had to flee, hiding
their tails,

We became independent, after the martyrs were wrapped
in coffins,

We do whatever we wish and brings us happiness,
We are not scared or afraid,
We have our own Raj.

Everyone, male or female, has the rights now,
One voice, determination and faith, in young and old,
Those who look at us with evil intention,
Shall be the target of our attack.

LADAKHI FOLK-SONGS

The Dard song about the Origin of the Earth
How did the earth first grow?

At first the earth grew on a lake.

What grew on the water?

On the water grew a meadow.

What grew on the meadow?

Three hills grew there.

What are the names of the three hills?

The name of one hill is the "White Jewel Hill."

What is the name of another hill?

The name of another hill is the "Red Jewel Hill."

What is the name of the one remaining hill?

The name of the one remaining hill is the "Blue Jewel Hill."

What grew on the three hills?

Three trees grew there.

What are the names of the three trees?

The name of one tree is the "White Sandal Tree,"

The name of another is the "Blue Sandal Tree,"

The name of the one remaining tree is the "Red Sandal Tree."

What grew on the three trees?
Three birds grew on the three trees.
What is the name of the one bird?
The name of the bird is "Wild Eagle."
What is the name of another bird?
The name of another bird is "Bamdoor Hen."
What is the name of the one remaining bird?
The name of the one remaining bird is "Blackbird."

Other Ladakhi Folk-Songs

A song from the ancient epic of King Nyima-gon reads:
Oh Father Nyima-gon
Do not go a-hunting
In my dream last night
I saw someting bad in my dream.
I, a boy, had to die,
I saw the colour of blood on my golden saddle.
I shall no more dance to the sound of trumpets and
clarinets.
Oh king, do not go a-hunting,
The son Zlava-gon has to die.

The history of Ladakh furnishes interesting sogs. Minister Ngorub Standzin composed his hymn in honour of king Tsepal. The hymn is graphic:

Through perfect good fortune
The happiness containing garden Karzo,
Not being built, came into existence by itself.
It is the house of the gods and the sun.
Having in the Zenith of the clear sky,
Sun and moon like umbrellas, so it arose.
It is a wonderfully pleasing sight;
It is like a fine room with pairs of pillars,
Within, on a lion's throne,
Sits Nyatri-tsampo's family;
That is the king of faith, Tsepal, and with mother and son.
May their feet on the lotus stand one hundred cycles of
years!

On this magnificent high nut-tree
 Male and female birds sing melodious songs.

The following is a passage from the song 'Prince Chogspur's fight;

The sun is rising, the warm sun of the East;

He is rising on the summit of the good place of three-fold happiness.

May the pure rays of the sun fall on the great town of Leh with the three courts of government!

When I, a boy, lived in my fatherland, I was surrounded by the servants, inside and outside the palace.

When Chogspur lived in the great town of Leh, the number of his servants was like the stars of heaven.

When I, a boy, went to a foreign country, I was alone with my horse.

When Chogspur went to Spiti; we were only one men and one horse.

When we went across all the large and little plains, I was so thirsty that I humbly for water.

When I, a boy, was still in my fatherland, I had always a pair of teapots, like the sun and moon.

Then I, a boy, went to sleep under a cedar tree...

Song of a Man Musician

The Tibetan Fiddle

Do not think that my fiddle, called Trashi Wanggyal,
 Does not possess a great father,
 If the divine wood of the pencil cedar
 Is not its great father, what else?

(Refrain)

Do not think that my fiddle, called Trashi Wanggyal,
 Does not possess a little mother!
 If the strings from the goat,
 Are not its little mother, what else?
 Do not think my fiddle, called Trashi Wanggyal

Does not possess any brother!
If the ten fingers of my hand
Are not its brother, what else?
Do not think that my fiddle, called Trashi Wanggyal,
Does not posses any friends!
If the sweet sounds of its own mouth
Are not its friends, what else?
Refrain
Shah Shah ma zhing Shah Shah ma zig,
Tse sang ma zhig song mol.

More Ladakhi Folk-Songs

‘Our lucky son’
The wheel fortune turned, unaccountably, suddenly,
A boy, who was poor and dressed in rags,
Became rich, so rich that he didn’t know,
How to spend his wealth-a headache to him.
Addressing him, his parents admonished him:
“Our lucky son, realised your good days have come,
Look, the brocades of China that you could only dream
about

Clothe you now and some of the attire trails behind your
feet.

“You wear the velved cap that you had never seen before.
In this head-gear and dress you look more beautiful than
a bridegroom.

The shawl that you are wearing is whiter than the white
clouds-

A shawl that you could’t have put on even in a dream.

“The sash you let trail to the floor,
Is made of the finest fabric from Lhasa,
And yet you couldn’t have dreamt of it,
In days gone by.

“The dagger inlaid with gems and the
painted pen-box set on your belt,

Wherfrom could you have secured these fineries?
Our lucky son, you are dressed like a bridegroom."

A belle Sings

I am the daughter of a big father,
I shall roam my blessed land.
I will buy all the precious stones,
The pherozas and other stones that fill my land.
Em Esso! Em Esso; Ha, Ha, Ha!
My mountains are high, sky-kissing,
In their bowels are the Pheroza mines,
I bought the gems to deck my perak,
Thus beautifully accoutred, I'll dance.
Em Esso! Em Esso! Ha, Ha, Ha!

A Love Lyric

Enclosed by walls, the garden is like Eden;
Inside it is a pond of milk.
A flower-laden pavilion is in the pond;
A shy princess is in the pavilion.
If that valiant hero comes to the palace,
I will be the doorman at the gate.
I shall look out the window,
If he comes to my locality.
If my beloved tends to forget me,
I will make him take a pledge (on a holy book)
Not to forget me.
A cat is crossing the Thangskam bridge,
The cat may go on or no,
I will not,
For my life is precious.

Ladakhi caravan in Tibet

The finest lamb wool from Rodak I have brought,
I make a Chuga for him out of this expensive wool,
People were happy to see him in this fine dress.

Their saddles poised on Chinese carpets, the caravan,
Loaded with food supply, headed for Rodak.

When the caravan reached Rodak, the Tibetan folks told

them,

"Look around, we have beautiful snow-capped mountains"

Ladakhis rejoined, "We have ponds full to the brim with oil extracted from the kernels of apricots."

One party asked the other; "What will you serve us once we are in your land?"

Tibetans said: "We will feast you on the best of our butter."

Ladakhis said: "We will make the finest dishes for you from the oil of the apricot kernels."

Ladakh caravan folks tell the Tibetans, appreciatively,

"We are happy to see your land; it is really worth living in,

"It is high like the horns of a yak, it is beautiful and durable."

Tibetans say, "The gate of our fort is made of iron,

It is impregnable; no one can break through it."

To this Ladakhis aver, "The gate of our fort,

Is made of magnetic iron; it pulls the weapons of our enemies."

Seeing Ladakhis accompanied by Singhal Namgel, who was a Raja,

Tibetans say, "You folks are lucky and prosperous,

A Raja accompanies your caravan; your laws are just."

The Tibetans commented thus, for their own laws are harsh;

They wrap people in animal hides and throw them out to die.

The Raja of Ladakh observed: "In our land all folks are equal."

Ali Hassan

Rakhasheer village is in the centre of our land,

Constructed by Khoja Ali Hassan is a mosque of gold,

In the upper dome of the mosque,

There is something like a golden cock that crows at dawn,

It isn't? cock but it is a man,

The one who says the Azan, he is Khoja Rasul.

We are all collecting in Bapzee polo ground to watch the

game.

The famous polo player, Khoja Ali Hassan, brought his team,

They played against the team from Muqla and defeated them,

Ali Hassan's team won but the opponents became his enemies.

His fame as a great polo player spread beyond Ladakh, Zorawar Singh invited him to the Kashmir court.

Ali Hassan set out for Kashmir but a terrible storm broke out at La-tien,

Ali Hasan prayed to God to subside the storm; it abated.

He reached Kashmir and had the Ali Masjid constructed there;

Secured Pheroze stones for inlay work of the mosque.

He also constructed a mosque in idgah maidan.

The people congregated at Ali Masjid, when it was ready, for Nimaz,

Ali Hassan did the Waizkhani and the folks were inspired.

Thereafter he was called to the Kashmir Durbar and honoured.

Ali Hassan conversed with the nobles,

His voice stood out amongst the courtiers even as the parrot's does.

Action at Bazgo

Three eagles are hovering over the tall palace of Bazgo,
These are no ordinary eagles but are my guardian deities,
In reality these are the guardians of Shalipa.

Mongolian soldiers are preparing to lay the siege,
Right from the summit of Laganz Kaze,

Aba Shalipa fixed the Bongsook cannon ;

With continuous fire from the cannon, he finished the Mongolian army.

Everyone including Aba Shalipa was happy.

From Bazgo's high palace, the uncle threw an arrow,

It hit a Mughal Soldier's cup and he reeled under the shock.

During the action, Shali Zom Zom walked
Towards the river and fled from there.
As for me, I have stuck to my post.

(S.N. DHAR)

9

Folk-Songs

Kashmiri, the vernacular of Kashmir, has descended from Sanskrit. Actually Kashmiri is a very old language. During Muslim rule, it was enriched by Persian diction, and later on, in the modern period, Urdu and Hindi have been influencing it considerably. Kashmiri has had a rich literature. It yet lives in its songs, the folk-songs, which form a veritable "literature of the people" of Kashmir. In the Golden Valley, with its abundant beauties of nature and man, it was but natural for some unknown hoary folk bard to have started the immortal vogue of folk-songs.

Folk-songs in Kashmir preserve the myths, customs, traditions and legends of bygone days. Thanks to Sir George Grierson, Sir Aurel Stein, Rev. J. Hinton Knowles, and Prof. Davendra Satyarthi, Kashmiri folk-lore has been revived. They are current in every rural home in Kashmir. Rural itinerant minstrels usually carry a Dahra, an iron rod with loose iron rings on it, and when they sing folk-song, they shake the rings skilfully up and down so as to produce a pleasing sound. These minstrels have mostly passed on the folk-songs by word of mouth down through the ages.

Kashmiri folk-songs resent considerable variety in theme,

content and form. They can be broadly classified into open and dancing songs, pastoral lore, romantic ballads, play-songs, semi-mystic songs etc. Then there are other songs sung during particular seasons or in accompaniment to certain occupations. Boatmen, labourers, seed-sowers, harvesters, embroiderers, papiermache makers, milk-men, saffron-reapers, shepherds, Village belles fetching water, grinding, stacking or weeding paddy, sing their different melodious folk-song in chorus. Yet others are sung as lullabies or cradle-songs, or at the birth of a child or at its circumcision or thread ceremonies. Then there are wedding songs sung in chorus by women at and before marriage ceremonies. Dirges, popularly known as Van, are sung in chorus by the women after the death of old persons in the family.

The predominant theme of folk-songs is a woman's touching plaint about her strayed lover who has deserted her. Here is a typical love song:

O, you must tell me
 Where my boy has gone,
 It he a fountain in life's garden,
 Or, a well of nectar, sweet and delicious?

The last two lines evince the power of exquisite imagery of the unknown folk-bard. These love songs are chaste, simple and pathetic. The love-sick maiden consoles herself in these words:

My love is out to tend his goats,
 And he must be waving a garland there:
 A garland of fresh, dewy, sosan flowers,
 For me, ye maidens.

The serpentine and calmly flowing river of the Valley, the Jhelum, forms the just theme of folk-songs:

O thou slow-motioned Jhelum!

For thee, let me devote my all, O Jhelum!

How great is thy stateliness?

For thee, let me devote my all, O Jhelum!

Kashmiri peasant women sing praises of the majestic and beautiful tree of Kashmir-the chinar. the beauty of its leaf is thus sung :

To me, O chinar leaf, my love has sent thee,

My all, O cupid, shall I sacrifice for thee.

Thou art, O chinar leaf, a prince of beauty,

My all, O Cupid, shall I sacrifice for thee.

Saffron is one of the most beautiful products of Kashmir. Saffron fields of Pampur, at a distance of 8 miles from Srinagar, are famous. Peasants, both men and women, sing exquisite folk-songs while picking saffron flowers. A part of a love song is :

Towards Pampur went away my darling

Saffron flowers caught him in fragrant embrace.

O, he is there and ah me! I'm here

When, where, O God, would I see his face?

A village girl may sing a conceit in sweet tones:

Proud of the self art thou,

O saffron flower!

Far lovelier than thee am I,

O saffron flower!

The labouring folk hardly enjoy the loved product of their labour or its usufruct, which goes to the contractor's store and they feel the poignant separation of the enchanting flower, as

they express in :

How pink is saffron's colour?
 Collecting it into heaps we are bathed in sweat,
 Soon, too soon, it will be hurried to the city.
 Enjoy its glorious view, O Samad,
 How pink is saffron's colour!

The touching refrain of the song is reminiscent of the wonderful view of the saffron blossom which is especially charming in full moon or at sunrise or sunset.

Saffron pilferers, actual of aspirant, justly shout the humorous doggerel:

At Pampore are the saffron fields,
 Bare-footed I shall steal saffron;
 My pir lives at Vijibrar,
 Why should I run there?

The poor Kashmiri peasants may not afford to use the shawl, Kashmir's world-famous product of art, but they spin its wool and love its beauty. the bride happily sings :

Shawl-wool shall I spin with my own hands,
 And shall get it dyed in saffron colour.

In a wedding-song the bridegroom's mother leads the chorus:

You pretty damsels, stay here to-night,
 Oh! do sing in honour of the Sultan of India.
 His wife's people claim him as their own,
 And I shall decorate his bed with mica.

The marriage ceremony is preceded by the so-called "Henna Night", when the hands and feet of the bride and bridegroom are dyed in henna, while women sing chorus songs far into the night:

We congratulate you on your 'henna night',
You have been blessed with God's mercy,
May you be safe from danger and accidents,
May God remove your difficulties.

The beauty of the bride is fitly sung by the rustic muse in such songs :

Our belle is robed in muslin,
Oh maid! who has dressed you?
Your teeth are so many pearls,
Who has delved them from the sea?
The bride's mother and her relatives sing:
Live long, O groom, live long,
O come up by our stairs.
I will adorn thy sword with the lotus,
O come up by our stairs.

The rose is the emblem of the bridegroom in another wedding prayer :

May this rose blossom forth, O God!
And may this streamlet of blessing run on 'O God!

Spring is the season when fruit trees look resplendent in their variegated blossoms and the shepherded girl addresses, the Marg, a meadow:

Far-off forests have all blossomed forth.
Hast not thou heard of me, my love?
Mountain lakes like Tar Sar are all full of flowers,
Hast not thou heard of me, my Love?

Not unoften do rural women work at the spinning wheel. To the accompaniment of this simple occupation, they sweetly hum songs, such as :

On my mat in my home is perched my spinning wheel,
I wheel it and weave threads out of it.

The imagination of the folk rises to poetic heights in the cradle songs. The peasant mother, comparing her darling to her ear-ring, her loved ornament, sings:

I rock thee, my ear-ring, I rock thee,
 Thou art the God of Love at evening,
 And the sun at early morning,
 I rock thee, my ear-ring, rock thee.

All these kinds of folk-lore contain the essentials of folk songs in that they have been verbally communicated from one generation of rustic and pastoral bards, minstrels and the peasantry in general to the other generation, and that they are sung at labour, dance, play or traditional ceremonies or craft-occupations. The unique characteristic of intricate vowel sounds coupled with liquid consonants of the Kashmiri language is reflected in its folk-songs, rendering them sweet in tone and alliterative in form. The simplicity of the theme and content of folk songs is matched by their imaginative, poetic fervour. No definite verse forms have hampered the poetic inspirations of the rustic Muse. The exquisite singing quality folk-songs is appreciated by even the ear of the foreigner.

Romantic ballads, originally sung by the peasantry and which have passed on verbally, continue to have universal appeal among the Kashmiri folk. Many a line from folk-tales are on the lips of villagers. they sing the highly contemplative lines from Shirin Khusroo :

Maddened by bewitching Shirin,
 Khusroo went to batter the mountain,
 To whom did this world prove faithful?
 Alas, who killed you, you lost one

In a wedding, song, the new couple may be compared to the legendary lovers, Himal and Nagrai, thus :

Nagrai will take his seat on the golden carpet,
 And shall take away Himal in the pearly palanquin!

Dirges are sung by women in chorus after any death in the family. Their poignant humour is touching as in :

The Hakim came and came, the patient (seemingly)

improved,

the pyre will be made of sandal wood.

Ruph or Dance Songs are delightful to hear when groups of girls or women stand in lines, interlocking their arms round each other's waist and heave forwards and backwards, giving themselves a wavy motion. they sing only a couplet in chorus, for instance :

Awake awake, O sweet hyacinth,
Come on, let us dance, O sweet hyacinth.

This couplet is melodiously repeated over and over again-producing an excellent effect of rhythm.

Present day folk-lore has not substantially added to the past, rich folk-lore of Kashmir. Like most folk-lore it is not high in point of prosody but, what matters is, that it is spontaneous and through it vibrates the very life of the masses of Kashmir, whose simple habits, bygone customs, loved traditions and past and present agrarian life are fitly mirrored in it. It throws open vast fields of activity for sustained research, so that it may be preserved, revived and rendered dynamic.

(S.N.Dhar)

II

Let us take a look at the folklore of Kashmir, the "Happy Valley", endeavouring to show its variety in theme, content and form, analyse how it is linked with the people's lore of the rest of the world.

Kashmiri, the vernacular of Kashmir, has descended from Sanskrit, the language of the gods," once the lingua of India. That Marco Polo referred to Kashmir by name shows that it is a very old language. Muslims ruled over Kashmir from the fourteenth century downwards. During their rule Persian was the State language, which resulted in Kashmiri being enriched with persian diction. Later, in the modern period, Urdu and Hindi influenced it considerably. For the last few generations, not a few English words have crept into it. Nevertheless, Kashmiri has maintained a distinct individuality.

Once Kashmiri had a rich and varied literature of its own, in its own script, Sarda. For many reasons, Sarda script which suited the nuances of the rather complex Kashmiri language, went out of use. Consequently, Kashmiri was reduced to a spoken language, but lately successful attempts have been made to evolve its own perso-Arabic script, now the medium of education in the State in the primary education stage. A colloquial language, however, lives in the story and song of folklore which comprise the important aspects of the traditional learning of the people.

Kashmiri is rich in folklore, especially the folk-tales and folk-songs narrated or sung by the people. There is an inexhaustible fund of folk-tales in Kashmir. They are, as folklorists have it, as old as the rocks. Many of them like Himal and Nagraya, Zohra Khotan and Haya Band, and Gulala Shah, are purely and distinctly Kashmiri in origin. Others, which constitute the large majority, are variants of popular tales of the East as well as the West. Where the home of these tales is, raises an interesting moot point for philological research, a largely unexplored field.

The inventive faculty of the folk mind has worked in much the same way in Eastern as well as the Western countries. The folk of Kashmiri have not been so cut off from the rest of the world as the mountainous barriers girding the valley, would lead one to suppose. Chenghiz Khan carried Eastern tales to Europe. They were translated into Persian and Arabic. Arabs spread them to the farthest corners of Europe. European invaders involuntarily reciprocated the compliment; intermixture of literature, art and science was implied in the very process of invasion and conquest. Greeks had enriched the Indian mind with Greek fables earlier. Likewise, Chinese travellers and Buddhist monks linked up the literature of the people of Asia. Not a few of them passed through and stayed in Kashmir. Thus was Kashmir's folklore connected with the people's lore of the rest of the world.

Phoenix, the legendary bird is called 'Huma' in Kashmiri folk-tales. The fortunate mortal, overshadowed by this bird of

luck, achieves great fame and distinction. The owl as the teacher of magic and the clever parrot in the role of the soothsayer, are other birds frequently occurring in Deccan, Bengal, Kashmir and other tales. The singing mystic fowl-whose eggs or flesh are said to be pricelessly valuable-occurs in Persian, German, Spanish and Kashmir tales. The Hatim or Harishchandra type of king, whose charity is unflagging even in the most trying circumstances, occurs in Kashmiri as in many Indian tales. Naga, or, snake-also meaning spring in peculiar to Kashmiri and Bengali tales. Kashyapa's wife, Kadru-so say the people of Kashmir in their tales-was the mother of Nagas, who peopled Patala, the region below the earth. the lover of Himal is Nagraya, the serpent-monarch, who assumed human form on the earth but was otherwise a snake in his spring. (A spring near Pampur in Kashmir is attributed to Nagraya).

Exchange of rings of lovers, which, later, in Cinderella style, helps to disclose the identity of estranged ones, is fairly common to folk-tales all over the world. Delightful replicas of shabrang-'prince Thief of Kashmir'-are to be found in these tales, Dravidian and Chinese tales. Ashraf ('the prince of thieves') of the Punjab is a near echo of Sharaf of Kashmir. Its robber band story of 'Ali Baba and Forty Thieves' of the Arabian Nights has parallels in many European, Tibetan, Chinese, Indian and Kashmir tales. Intriguing stories of absent thieves like Laiq Tsur, and his famous 'pupil', Mahadeva Bhista, are current in villages and city homes of Kashmir.

The prose of Kashmir folk-tales is picturesquely colloquial. Nature's charms of the Vale of Cashmere add not a little to the beauty of figure and aptness of diction. The faithfulness of the people to the narrative is striking. It is the rural folk who have mainly preserved these treasures of literature of the people in a largely undiluted form. An old peasant narrating a folk-tale often interprets it with fragments of narrative poetry which makes the telling more effective.

Equally interesting are the folk-song of Kashmir. In the Golden Valley of Kashmir, with its abundant beauties of nature and of man, it was but natural for some unknown hoary folk-

bard to have started the immortal vogue of folk-songs. Probably the composer of Kashmiri folk-songs lived in the tenth century. In the folk-song poet Tagore found the "creative aspect of the popular minds." He offered his salutation to "the poet of the unknown multitude." It may be that this humble proletarian literature is not high in point of form and expression but is a record of creative self-expression of the people and reveals the masses in their manifold occupations.

Folk-songs of Kashmir present considerable variety in theme, content, and form. They can be broadly classified into opera and dancing songs, pastoral lore, romantic ballads, play-songs, semi-mystic songs and those sung during particular seasons or in accompaniment to certain occupations.

The predominant theme of folk-song is a woman's touching and sweet plaint about her strayed lover, who has deserted her. She addresses her plaint to her girl-friend, beginning with the poignant words, *Hai Vesiya* meaning, "Alas my (girl) Friend." Here is a lyrical love song :

O you must tell me.
Where my boy has gone.
Is he a fountain in life's garden
Or, a well of nectar, sweet and delicious?

The last two lines evince the power of exquisite imagery of the unknown folk-bard.

These love-songs are chaste, simple and pathetic. They acquire singular charm when village women sing them in chorus, which dancing, harvesting or fetching water from the ghat. The serpentine, majestic and calmly flowing river of the beautiful valley of Kashmiri, the Jhelum, forms the just theme of many a song of the people :

O thou slow-motioned Jhelum,
For thee, let me devote my all, O Jhelum
How great is thy stateliness, O Jhelum
For thee let me devote my all, O Jhelum.

Kashmiri peasant women-sing praises of the majestic and beautiful tree of Kashmir-the chinar. The beauty of its leaf is

thus sung :

To me, O chinar leaf, my love has sent thee,
My all, O Cupid, shall I sacrifice for thee.
Thou art, O chinar leaf, a prince of beauty,
My all, O Cupid, shall I sacrifice for thee.

Saffron is one of the most beautiful products of Kashmir. Saffron fields of Pampur, a town at a distance of seven miles from Srinagar, are famous. Peasants, both men and women, sing melodious song while picking saffron flowers. A part of a love-song sung by a maiden is :Towards pampur went away my darling,

The saffron flowers caught him in fragrant embrace,
O, he is there and, ah me, I am lost here,
When, where, O God, would I see his face?
A village girl may sing a 'conceit' in sweet tones :
Proud of thyself art thou,
O saffron flowers !
For lovelier than thee am I,
O saffron flower !

The labouring folk hardly enjoyed the loved product of their labour or its usufruct, which used to go to the contractor's store, and they would feel and poignant separation of the enchanting flower, as they express in :

How pink is saffron's colour !
Collecting it into heaps we are bathes in sweet,
Soon, too soon, it will be burried to the city, Enjoy its
glorius view, O Samad,

How pink is saffron's colour!

The touching refrain of the song is reminiscent of the wonderful view of the saffron blossom which takes on lovely hues in full moon, at sunrise or at sunset.

Saffron pilferers, actual aspirant, lustily shout the humorous doggerel :

Al pampore are the saffron field,
Bare-footed I shall steal saffron

My Pir lives at Vijibrar,
Why should I run there?

The poor Kashmiri peasants may not afford to use the shawl, Kashmir's world-famous product of art, but they spin its wool, dye it in saffron and other colours, and love its beauty. The bride happily sings:

Shawl-wool shall I spin with my own hands,
And shall get it dyed in saffron colour.

Wedding Bells

In a wedding-song the bride-groom's mother lead the chorus:

You pretty damsels, stay here to-night,
Oh! do sing in honour of the Sultan of India,
His wife's people claim him as their own,
And I shall decorate his bed with mica.

The marriage ceremony is preceded by the so-called "henna night", when the hands and feet of the bride and bridegroom are dyed in henna, while women sing chorus songs far into the night :

We congratulate you on your 'henna night',
You have been blessed with God's mercy,
May you be safe from danger and accidents,
May God remove your difficulties.

The beauty of the bride is fitly sung by the rustic muse of the tune of wedding bells in such songs :

Our belle is robbed in muslin,
Oh maid ! who has dressed you ?
Your teeth are so many pearls,
Who has delved them from the sea?

The bride's mother and her relatives sing :
Live long, O groom, live long,
O come up by our stairs,
I will adorn thy sword with the lotus,
O come up by our stairs.

The rose is the emblem of the bride-groom in another wedding prayer :

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May this rose blossom forth, O God!
And may this streamlet of blessing run on, O God!

Spring is the season when fruit trees look resplendent in their variegated blossoms and the shepherd girl sings full-throatedly in the marg-a mountain meadow :

Far-off forests have all blossomed forth,
Hast not thou heard of me, my Love?
Mountain lakes like Tar Sar are all full of flowers,
Hast not thou heard of me, my Love!

Not unoften do rural women work at the spinning wheel. To the accompaniment of this simple occupation, they sweetly hum songs, such as :

On my mat in my home is perched my spinning wheel,
I wheel it and weave threads out of it...

The imagination of the folk rises to poetic thights in 'cradle songs'. The peasant mother, comparing her darling to her ear ring-her loved ornament-sings:

I rock thee, my ear-ring, I rock thee,
Thou art the God of Love at evening,
And the sun at early morning,
I rock thee, my ear-ring, I rock thee...

The unique characteristic of intricate vowel sounds coupled with liquid consonants of the Kashmiri language is reflected in its folk-songs rendering them sweet in tone and alliterative in form.

Romantic ballads, originally sung by the peasantry, which were passed on verbally, have universal appeal among the Kashmiri folk. Many a line from folk-tales is on the lips of villagers. They sing the highly contemplative lines from Shirin Khusroo :

Maddened by bewitching Shirin,
Khusroo went to better to mountain,
To whom did this world prove faithful?
Alas, who killed you, you lost one?

In a wedding-song, the new couple may be compared to

the legendary lovers-Himal and Nagraya, thus:

Nagraya will take his seat on the golden carpet,
And shall take away Himal in the pearly palanquin!

Dirges are sung by women in chorus after any death in the family. Their poignant humour is touching as in:

The Hakim came and came, the patient
(seemingly) improved,
The pyre will be made of sandalwood.

During cold weather nights, Kashmiris in villages sit round the fire and listen to an old man or the village minstrel with his Sarangi or Dehra or Rabab, or even a wandering faqir, who recite the popular ballads of Himal and Nagraya, Yusuf Zulekhah, Hatim Tai, Rustum and Sohrab, Ballads connected with the life of Krishna and Rama, and yet others, all of these being also current in the more popular form of folk-tales. These ballads have vitalized Kashmiri poetry in general, and Kashmiri folk-songs in particular.

Like most folk-lore, that of Kashmiris is not high in point of prosody or qualities essential to folk-tales, but, what matters is, that through it vibrates the very life of the masses of kashmir whose simple habits, bygone customs loved traditions, and past and present agrarian and pastoral life, are faithfully and picturesquely mirrored in it.

10

Kashmir : The Assessment

The fruit of Kashmir is a great boon to Northern India as well as to itself. In the spring, the blossoms are exquisite additions to the countryside; the pulm-like driven snow, the finecups of the pear flowers, the delicate tints of the apricot and apple, and the bright pink of almond and peach, defy any but a fairy pen to describe. The rich scent of young walnut leaves and clinging vines all rejoicing in spring sunshine after winter, bring delight even to a people who pay no attention to the grander beauties of Nature. Bright splashes of yellow show us where the mustard fields are, the delicate fields of blue flax and linseed march with them.

In the autumn we may meet strings of bullock carts slowly wending their way down to the panjab with fragrant loads of apples. The fruit generally lacks the flavour of English-grown fruit, probably because it ripens too quickly and because pruning is not properly understood. Not native of India of Kashmir understands using the knife, the roses and fruit trees, lose their quality quickly in consequence. their usual method of pruning is to clip the branches level, ignorant of whether they are destroying new wood and fruiting buds. But European supervision has now been introduced and the cultivated fruit is fast improving. Vines are grown too, but the grapes are not

thinned and the usually gathered unripe-a most disappointing shock when we see the splendid basketfuls displayed for sale. A light country wine, both red and white, is made, very like foreign vin ordinaire, but it will not travel well, and cannot be exported any distance.

Mulberries are largely cultivated, for food for man and beast, but especially for the sake of sericulture of silk-spinning. Walnuts and water-nuts (zinghara) are grown for food. The former are stored in large wooden barns. The fresh walnuts are creamy and delicious. They are also exported; the best kind is called khagus, or paper, as its shell crushes like paper in the hand. The zinghara grows on the Wular lake for miles. It is a black nut with a hard spiked shell. The people also eat a great many wild herbs and roots and fungi.

The trees of Kashmir are one of its finest features, from the avenues of poplar which marshall the roads into Kashmir, to the graceful birches which, notwithstanding their apparent fragility, are the hardiest and highest growing of all the trees.

The deodar, or Himalayan cedar, is a fine tree, and grows from 4000 to 900 feet above sea-level. But the trees which always stand out in one's memory are the splendid plane or chinar, although walnuts run them hard as to size and shade. Then there are ash maple, sycamore, elm, and many varieties of pine and fir. The scent of the pines when the sun shines after rain makes us draw in breath after breath of their healthful fragrance. There are plenty of small fry in the way of trees too, hazel and hawthorn, and in some valleys rhododendrons with their rich colour.

There are not only countless sorts of trees, but in the higher valleys we have the lovely park-land with its spreading trees and woods, and on the slopes of the mountains we can lose ourselves in vast forests, where the tree trunks tower above us.

Can we not race here the first conception of temples and cathedrals? A wonderful and sacred silence impresses us as we wander through these solemn isles, and gaze at their columns and arches, and the delicate tracery of their branches.

Certainly the ideas for the temple he wished to build for the God of Israel came to King David in this way, for he vowed that he could not rest "until I find out a place for the temple of the Lord, and an habitation for the mighty God", adding later, "We found it in the wood."

On the way to the forests we pass through lighter woods and glades, where wild roses and honeysuckle and jasmine pour out their sweetness. The flowers of Kashmir are one of its chief joys, at all events to us who love flowers. The beautiful lotus flower spreads its rose and white petals like a floating carpet on the lakes, in company with white and yellow water-lilies. From these royal flowers down to the tiniest alpine blossom pressing close to mother earth's bosom the flowers are legion.

In the early spring hosts of mauve primulas like cowslip balls, and more delicate pink ones, purple and white anemones and bright little gentians, bring colour to the bare spaces left by melting snow even before the grass springs green; and while this goes on all over the slopes of the mountains, the valley bursts into blue and mauve irises, and white and hold narcissus and crocus, and pink tulips shake their dainty heads.

The wood of the deodar is used for building purposes, and the beautifully carved pillars in the temples were always made from it. So also are boats; but the forests have been used up near Srinagar, and the expense of bringing the timber from the more distant forests is great. It is the same with walnut wood, which is used for furniture, gun-stocks, etc. The wood of the ash is used for boat-paddles and ploughs. Fibre is grown for mats, rope, and the string used for fishing-nets, and the willow withies are used for baskets.

There is a great deal of tanning and dyeing with bark; also a strong paper is made from birch bark, but it has rather a shiny surface and is not very lasting for records, as writing can easily be erased with water. It is almost waterproof, and is used instead of glass in the windows during the winter.

We trace the homes of many an English garden favourite to the Himalayas. Botanists have sent home seeds and roots,

and horticulturists have educated the rather puny (in some cases) little blossoms till they are proud to print them in seed catalogues. We find irises, wall-flowers, tulips, pinks, pansies, forget-me-nots, campanulas, monkshood, larkspur, sunflowers, marigolds, columbines, canterbury bells, thrift, rock-rose, potentilla, daisies, bugloss, ranunculus, saxifrage, poppies, balsams, orchis, wild rose, clematis, lords-and-ladies, mallows, marsh-marigolds, and anemones, as well as all the alpine flowers.

And again Kashmir possesses the wild flowers of our own fields, such as thyme, mint, rest-harrow, hawkbit, bright-eye, speedwell, campions, buttercups, and daisies. But it seems impossible to exhaust the list, though we naturally are able to place the flowers in their proper seasons, for they do not all bloom at the same time. Sometimes we read descriptions of flowers in books such as this: "Tall Makonna lilies sheltered humble primrose, and flaunting hollyhocks were surrounded by curtseying violets," showing that the writer, however he or she might love flowers, was ignorant of their habits.

Imagine the delight of walking barefoot through a meadow of cool, thick grass with large edelweiss and blue gentians, and of counting as many as fifty different flowers in one day's walk! There is a wonderful sky-blue poppy to be found in the Wardwan valley.

The sad part very often to would-be botanical collectors is that the time to take seed of any new or rare plant is very seldom the time one is in Kashmir, for plants cannot be taken up or moved with any safety when in bloom.

Kashmir has always been noted for its good sport, and there are still noble animals living in a natural state on the slopes of its mountains, even high up in country so austere that one wonders how they can find food.

In the highest parts of all we come across marmots, quaint little beasts which utter shrill cries. They look so amusing sitting up on their strong hindlegs, and vanish into their holes in a twinkling when they catch sight of any one. A dachshund of mine once pursued a marmot down into a hole in the rocks, and then found he couldn't turn his long body to get

out. We heard piteous cries, and at last dug him out; but mother marmot had tried to teach him to mind his own business by biting the tip off his nose.

Ibexes, with their fine long horns, live among very steep rocks too; so do markhor, the great mountain goats with long beards and horns. Thar is another kind of mountain goat, found in the pir pangal and Kaj-i-Nag, Snow-leopards and black bears are common everywhere. The bears love walnuts and maize, and when the nuts and crops are ripe they come down and forage for themselves, and many a peasant has disfiguring scars from the smacks he has received. Wolves and foxes and wild dogs are in the hills called the bara singh, or great red-deer. the gooral, a kind of chamois, makes his home in hot cliffs on river banks. red bears are less common than in past years.

There are monkeys in most of the low forests, chattering as they swing from bough to bough, just as excited at the sight of our dogs as the dogs bark at seeing them.

The musk deer is a graceful creature as far as its shoulders, with lovely velvety eyes and soft ears and nose, it increases in size behind the shoulders, and has big hind-legs and coarse hair.

Fish are a very useful element of food to the natives of Kashmir, from the great mahseer, coarse to eat if exciting to catch, to the numerous small fry caught in the rivers.

Trout preserving is making headway now under European guidance, and the fat speckled fellows lie up as comfortably under willow trees in their new homes as in any stream in the British Isles. The goose and duck shooting is excellent in the late autumn and cold weather, also chikor, a kind of partridges. There are other varieties of both partridge and pheasant. The monal pheasant has beautiful plumage, and the kaklass is another kind.

There are pigeons, green, blue, and grey, in every wood, and cooing doves and cuckoos bring back home woods to our minds. Hosts of little birds, all familiar to us, are to be

seen, as well as brilliantly coloured ones like the golden oriole, the paradise fly-catcher, with its floating tail like silver ribbon; the kingfisher, with turquoise-blue back and orange breast; the hoopoo, with its fanlike feathers and head cockade.

The birds of Kashmir have a very happy existence, and we are reminded, when we think of long hot weary days spent in the plains by those who would fain fly to such a paradise as Kashmir, of the cry of the Psalmist king who put his longing into poetic words, "O for the wings, for the wings of a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest."

No more perfect country has been provided by Nature than this valley where larks poise high, trilling out their praise, where doves coo in sweet content, and where great Lammergeier eagles sail in powerful majesty.

(C.G.Bruce).

You know how in railway travelling, if one has to get from one rather remote place to another, the best things to do is to go to a junction and change there. It is quicker than going across country. And so it is with travel in a mountainous country. One makes for a pass instead of a railway junction, as it is the lowest or easiest point at which to cross the mountains. The lowest pass in the Himalayas is the Zoji La in Kashmir, and it leads into Central Asia from the charming Sonamarg we have just been visiting in imagination.

To go from one side of the pass to the other is an object lesson in watersheds. Supposing we cross the pass in early August. We leave a series of wet camps in the Sind valley, for though we may have one bright day at Sonamarg the monsoon rainfall has set in, and the next day is wet again. So we start from Balltal, a green camp of soaked grass and dripping trees in a thick Scotch must, and with heavy loads (for wet tents are nearly double the weight of dry), we slowly wind our way into the defile and up a steep zigzag path. Though we have ponies, we soon prefer to dismount of our own accord before the saddles slip back, for it is very steep. But we can scramble along bravely, if breathlessly, and the ponies give us a helping tail to hang on by.

The masses of lovely wild flowers all the way upkeep us in exclamations of delight. Fancy cup-and-saucer canterbury bells like little white coffee-cups, and blue aconites and larkspurs, with various coloured michaelms daisies ! If we ask our pony-men or coolies what are the names of these (to us) garden treasures, they look astonished and reply, "Oh, flowers, these are called flowers." "Yes, but what are their names ?" "Oh, flowers, just flower," they repeat, very unlike our own country-folk at home, who have a common name for each wild flower. But the country-folk know the wild herbs, and find some medicinal virtue in all of them.

At last we finish our climb, and pause to wonder where the ancient battle between the hillmen and invaders from the north took place and we recall similar battle such as those in our own famous Killiecrankie and Glencoe Passes. But having got very hot, and feeling very wet from heat and rain, we must not stop, for it is too damp to sit about, you say Damp ? Why, it is as dry as a bone. All the moisture remains on the Kashmir side of the watershed, and we are on short dry turf with bare bold rocks at about us, and the Dras river cutting its way between rocks burnt black as coal slag by the fierce sun in that dry air. Here and there patches of snow demonstrate to us that a month or two back we should have had great difficulty in making our way over the pass.

Not so many marches on is another pas, the Umba La, still in Kashmir territory, and leading us over into the district of Suru.

Starting from another narrow defile, in which a winding stream finds its way down through reddish rock, we find ourselves on steep grassy slopes. Again we hang on to the ponies' tails as they gallantly drag us up. But now and then we pause to pick the alpine flowers, which in the fresh breeze blow on the hillside like multi-coloured waves; such edelweiss, and such endless treasure, that one groans at leaving them behind! At last we must turn our backs on them, for we are nearing the summit of the pass, where fresh delights are awaiting us.

Here we are at about 15,000 fee, on a level with the top of

Mount Blanc, and with a perfect view spread out on every side; peak after peak, range behind range, fading into blue and silver haze. Here and there glaciers make splashes of white, and great valleys shade into deep blue. Some of the near hills are reddish brown, some are bare and bleak; but the whole panorama is so grand and the air so brilliant, that we forget our fatigue as we rest on the backing rocks.

The descent, some 4000 feet, needs all our fortitude blistered toes, aching backs, cramped legs, with continual slips in soft dusty shale, make one long for a Swiss railway; so you see the epithet, "easiest place to cross a mountain range," applied to passes, is only by way of comparison.

To get back into the Kashmir valley we have to cross two more passes, the Bot Khol and the Margan. The former is very high up, and consists chiefly of glaciers and seracs, or deep fissures in the ice. On a fine morning it is glorious work, but though we start in sunshine rain comes up on the other side (for we are going over again to the wet side of the watershed), and we have to camp on the pas in driving rain, and sleet, and it is bitterly cold. But to-morrow is sure to be fine, and then we shall have another splendid view right down the glacier which takes us into the Wardan valley, and so back over the Margan Pass into Kashmir itself again.

One very famous pass we must not omit to visit while we are in Kashmir, and that is the Tragbal, which is above the head of the Wular lake. Starting from Bandipura, it is the direct military road to Gilgit and Astor, two important outposts of our frontier; now a respectable road, in old days a mere track. Tragbal itself is a grass clearing in the forest on the mountain side, surrounded with pine forests, from which you get lovely peeps of the Wular lake and a perfect view of Mount Haramouk. The central point of the pass is five miles farther on, 12,000 feet high.

This snowy shelf is the said spot where we would bid farewell to fair Kashmir if our way took us towards Central Asia.

In speaking of the hazardous bridges of Kashmir, we should

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mention another kind common in the mountains, a snow bridge. These are built by Nature, not man, and are formed by avalanches of snow which fall in the winter and early spring. The great mass falls down the mountain side till it is brought up by a narrow valley and a frozen torrent. It blocks up the narrow road and freezes as hard as stone. By degrees this great mass is melted by June sunshine, and it breaks up and falls into the river, here and there leaving regular bridges of frozen snow. These are hard, and safe to cross in early summer, and we may stand on one and watch the melting waters churning and raging their frothy, impatient way down the rocky channel, and thundering under another bridge of grey and yellow marble, for as the snow melts it looks dirty yellow with black streaks. Sometimes with a roar the bridge falls in, and the triumphant waters dash great blocks of frozen snow along in their haste to join the main river and melt into its calm peace.

Over some of the mountain torrents beyond the beaten track we have to cross much worse bridges than even these. A snow bridge is either passable when it is easy enough, or it is unsafe and impassable. But the country-folk make rough wooden bridges, which are generally safe, but terribly unpleasant to us, though the native coolies or porters will trot over them quite happily with a load on their backs. The worst kind are fashioned from rough trees, which are just thrown across, and, if the torrent is wide, two trees are employed. The roots are buried in earth and heavy stones on either side of the stream; and the trunks, from which the branches and bark have been stripped, are lashed together with a twisted branch rope. It is the old cantilever principle, but in the rough is inclined to sag even more than a well-bred dachshund. We once crossed such a bridge as this, but you may be sure we came back a different way.

(C.G. Bruce)

III

It was in 1835 A.D. when three European visitors Baron Charles Von Hugel, G.T. Vigne and Dr. John Henderson visited

Kashmir, which was then a part of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's domination (ruler of the Punjab). Hugel was a well known Austrian Botanist and the rest were of the English nationality. Kashmir was then ruled by Maharaja's viceroy or governor, Col. Mohan Singh.

Hugle reached Srinagar on 17th November 1835 A.D. through Pir Panchal Pass known then as Old Mughal route. He obtained Maharaja's permission to visit Kashmir and the governor treated him as a State guest. He halted at the first station near Srinagar which he calls Kakanpur Sarai now Kampur Sarai, ten kilometers in the south of Srinagar, Tehsil Chandura. Here he saw a big military cantonment built by the Sikh Government and about two division regiments, i.e., 1200 men were being drilled and trained by the European Generals. Their uniform consisted of a "red jacket; "blue trousers" and "blue turbans".

Then the esteemed visitor entered "Shaherghur" (Sherghari palace) in the evening and was received by the Sikh governor and his officials "Shaherghur" (Sherghari palace) was then governor's official residence and a strong fortress built by the great Afghan ruler, Amir Khan Jawan Shir. The Sikh Governors named it as Narsinghgarh. It was a walled city but "unfitted for defence" says the visitor (Baron Von Hugel) and was the official residence of Afghan Governors upto 1819 A.D. Sheikh Imam ud Din the last Sikh Governor, founded a grand mosque in its northern corner in 1845 A.D. (1275 A.J.) which has now been reconstructed by the residents of the locality known as Qila Masjid (Shahheed Ganj) near Old Sectt: gate.

Hugel was then lodged in a house, surrounded by "filthy and ruinous" suburb on the bank of the river Jhelum and here at this spot (near present DC's office) Jhelum reminded him of the river "Arno at Florence" which seemed to him much deeper and remarkably still and says "it winds most picturesquely through the city and is covered with boats of various forms and fashioun". He says "Shergurh palace" (Sherghari) has several retainers of the court both civil and military. The entrance to the palace leads from the river bank through a wooden stairs which also leads to terrace and pavilion,

adorned with "curiously carved wood".

On his request, the visitor (Hugel) was allotted a spacious and clean place to live in, half a mile below sherghari palace known then and now also as Bhagidilawar Khan. These quarters were being usually assigned to the Europeans visiting the valley during the Sikh rule. These are situated on the banks of Brari Nambal, branch of the Dal Lake near the entrance of Old Mar canal. It is now the site of M.P. Higher Secondary School. Here the other two British visitors Messers G.T. Vigne and Dr. John Henderson had already taken up their residence. Its garden was surrounded by fruit trees, vines and beautiful persica with two little square buildings. He then pitched up his tent like the other two visitors. "He was warmly received by the inhabitants of Srinagar". A party of Kashmiri females received him with songs "Vanvoon", "Kashmiries are very handsome", says he, "especially their female folk who are superior to them in beauty."

The aim of these early visitors to Kashmir was to observe the activities of the Russian Czar in the north of His Majesty's empire (India) who was then extending his empire and influence in Central Asia. Dr. Henderson had returned to Srinagar from Ladakh to trace the source of the river 'Attock' but actually to ratify the treaty which Mr. William Moorcraft early British visitor had entered with the Raja of Ladakh in 1822-23 A.D.

Mr. Hugel gives a pathetic picture of Srinagar under the Sikh rulers who were the master of the "Vale of Kashmir", Srinagar which was once a city of palaces and reduced to dilapidated houses, streets of unemplid filthiness. This was his first observation and says "I turned my disappointed gaze from the works of man to the glorious mountain scenery above (Mehadev and Zubuivan peaks) with their thousand peaks of snowy whiteness, their graceful outlines, the harmony and repose which seemed to characterise the calm mointionless valley, the contrast between simple majestic nature and enterprising ambitious man filled my heart with emotions which imprinted the beauties of the first on my memory and make human works lose every shadow of significance. "Srinagar is a

city of bridges and seven bridges span the river Jhelum. They are most dangerous and most enduring. They are composed of large cedar trees, fifteen to twenty feet long and three feet in diameter, A storm or wind of any great violence is a thing altogether unknown in Kashmir, Jhelum is covered with boats of every size which gives a pleasant stirring appearance to the whole city. Streets leading to the big mosque (Jamia Masjid) are dirty and muddy. It is pity that Jamia masjid is in a ruinous condition and closed for prayers. Here Azan, or call to prayers is prohibited. Sickness and famine have of late years so depopulated it that it produces revenue of small amount. He observes that at the foot of Harni (Hari Parbat) parvat there was once another city called as Nagar Nagar and enclosed with strong walls and towers. This city is now in dilapidated condition and was once the loveliest part of the valley. Blocks of stone and large columns lie in desolate grandeur around. In this city a beautiful mosque called Aklun Mullah Shah lies perishing. It has five black marble and stone lavished upon it. Not a living soul loves in Nagar Nagar. The fort of Hari parvat is called Kohi Maran. It is garrisoned by the Sikh troops. The guards do not allow any person to proceed further nor attempt to ascend the heights.

Islamabad (present day Anantnag) "city of the faith", is the second city of Kashmir. It is but a shadow of its former self. Its spacious houses are in ruins. Its principle streets are all deserted. Many dwelling places have sunk into decay and exposed to wind. The beautiful carved ornamenting the terraces and windows is nearly destroyed by owls and jackals who are the most frequent occupants of the place. Jackals are in abundance in Kashmir.

Punishments are very heavy. "Criminals are hanged on the branches of chinar trees. They are dragged sometimes through the streets of Srinagar. Penalties and strips are usual punishments".

On 3rd December 1835, he left Srinagar in a boat via Jhelum Valley.

(Von Charles Hugel)

IV

During the 19th century Central Asia had become the target of Russian colonial expansion with the consolidation of Russian Empire under Peter the Great and the great queen Catherine. This advance caused the British Government great anxiety who had now established its empire in the Sub-continent. Russian pushing south from South Siberia established themselves on three Khanates-Bukhara, Khiva, Kokand and even upto Pamirs. William Moorcraft, an enterprising Veterinary Surgeon, probably the first Englishman to Kashmir was commissioned by the British Government to make journey through the Himalayas to the table land of Tibet to collect political and military information for the British fort in India. He had enormous difficulties in obtaining permission from Ranjit Singh-the Sikh ruler of the Punjab, to whom Kashmir was then subject. His adventurous spirit took him to the remotest corners of northern India which was not known to any European traveller till then. Mr. Moorcraft toured the whole of Nubra Valley till he reached the eastern boundary of Ladakh beyond Pangong lake. He wished to go to Yarkand but the Chinese authorities refused the permission. So he decided to set out for Bukhara by way of Kashmir. When he reached Leh in 1821, he became possessed of a letter from Russian minister recommending a merchant to the good offices of Ranjit Singh, assuring him that the traders of the Punjab and Kashmir would be well received in the Russian Dominion and Russian Emperor is the well-wisher of Ranjit Singh". Russians were in communication with the Raja of Ladakh as it proved later on. On coming to know of this, the British Government began to take active interest in the affairs of Kashmir and its frontier regions from the beginning of 19th century. Mr Moorcraft reached Srinagar in 1822 and stayed here upto May 1823 in company with Izzatullah, his guide and interpreter. Moti Ram was the Sikh Governor of Kashmir at this time. He was lodged in a guest house at Bagi-Dillawar Khan on the banks of BVrari-Nambal and was beset by the crowds of people who not only filled the garden but also came in boats. He was pursued wherever he went by inquisitive crowds, by importunate beggars and by suspicious

officials. He was pleased to see the natives of Kashmir and characterises them as the most lively and ingenious people of Asia, highly intellectual and morally assume a high scale.

He gives a picturesque account of the city of Srinagar and says 'It is situated towards Mullah Mar where the best houses in the city are to be found. There are several canals flowing through it which are crossed at various places by stone and wooden bridges whose condition is that of decay and are chocked with clay and mud. Sheikh mohalla is the centre of trade and in it are the houses of big merchants and bankers. It will become the focuss of Asiatic civilization, a minature of England in the heart of the Asia. It is Kashmir that has had the fullest and closest contact with a vast variety of cultures. It maintains its celebrity as the most delicious spot in Asia or in the world'. He was moved to see the economic condition of Kashmiris who were in most abject circumstances and draws a pathetic picture'. They are exorbitantly taxed by the Government and subjected to every kind of extortion and oppression by its officers. Not more than about one sixteenth of cultivable surface is in cultivation and Kashmiris are driven in great numbers to the plains of Hindustan. That five hundred emigrants accompanied him. Every trade was taxed. Shawl was the most important industry in Kashmir and he tells us that it is the only industry which gives employment to 20 thousand persons. It is stamped and taxed at 26% with heavy duty on its materials imported. The value of Shawl goods manufactured is about Rs. 25 lakhs per annum but it has begun to decline. Considerable sum is also raised from the import of wool. Every shop or workman connected with this material is taxed.

The whole land is the property of the ruler and is known as khalsa land. Cultivators are in extreme wretchedness and the Government instead of taking only half a produce on the threshing floor had now advanced its demands to three quarters. Buchers-bakers-boatmen vendors of fuel, public notaries—all paid a sort of corporation tax and even the kotwal or chief officer or justice paid a large gratuity of thirty thousand of rupees a year for his appintment.

Villages where Moorcraft visited in Lalal pargana were half deserted and the inhabitants were a semblance of extreme poverty. He was shocked to see that people were allowed to reap very little advantage from their labours for a troop of tax gaterers were alays in the village who had sequestered nine tenths of grain of the former for the revenue. The consequences of this system are gradual depopulation of the country. Inhabitants are starving. People of the city are thinning though less from immigration than poverty and disease.

On Islamabad or presently Anantnag he was disappointed to see that it was swarming with beggars and the inhabitants around were 'half naked and miserably emaciated' presented a ghastly picture of poverty and starvation. The rulers, he says, looked upon Kashmiries little better than cattle.

He observed that the general character of the city of Srinagar is that of 'confused mass of ill-favoured buildings, narrow lanes, scarcely broad enough for a single cart to pass, badly paved. Houses are generally two or three storeys and are badly constructed and neglected and present a runious condition with broken doors or no doors at all. During his stay he brought to light the grave of Mirza Haider Dougalat, ruler of Kashmir 1542—A.D. and got a stone inscription installed at his grave in Mazari Salatin (Maharaj Gung) which is extant and in a bad state of preservation.

Before his departure through Jhelum Valley road he got an inscription on stone pillar inatalled at Char Chinari giving the names of Europeon visitors to Kashmir.

He was stopped at Uri by the semi-independent Khakha ruler who demanded Rs. 5000/- as custom duty which he refused to pay and then left through old Moghul road.

(William Moorcraft)

V

Mr Fredrick Drew, an Englishman was employed in the various civil capacities during the Maharaja's Government in 1862 A.D. and was asked to do geological investigation in the

State. In 1865, he was put in charge of Ladakh in order to remove all indirect restrictions upon central Asian trade in that quarter. He was in the service of Maharaja of Kashmir for a period of ten years from 1862 to 1872 A.D.

He has left behind a memorable account of what he observed here. He says that Kashmir has justly a reputation for something distinctive if not unique in its character. Its position and form together are such that there is no parallel to it in the whole of Himalayas. It is a plain embedded among the mountains, a wide vale enclosed by mountain ranges lying at such a height above the sea as on the one hand to be of a climate entirely different from that of India, being saved from the heat that parches its plains and on the other hand to be free from the severity of cold that visits the more lofty plateaus or wide valleys that are found more towards the centre of the mass of the mountains.

Of the people of Kashmir he writes that Kashmiri people are doubtless physically the finest of all races that inhabit the territories of the valleys of Kashmir. They are of the finest race on the whole continent of India. Their physique, their character and their language are so marked as to produce an identity from allround as distinct from their neighbours as their country is geographically separated. The face of a Kashmiri is of pure High Aryan type, particularly of Kashmiri pandit. Muslims and the peasantry have kept their breed unmixed. They are a robust race broad shouldered and large framed and of great muscular power. Their clothing is simple that of the poor people is entirely woollen.

Kashmiris have qualities which one to be interested. They are noisy but not quarrelsome nor are given to fight. They hate blood-shed. In intellect they are superior to their neighbours and are certainly keener than Punjabis and in perfection and clearness of mind and ingenuity, far outvie their masters, the Dogras. In disposition they are cheerful and humorous. Kashmiris are good linguists nearly all the men and a good proportion of women know either Punjabi or Hindustani. The Hindustani indeed will well carry one through Kashmir though Punjabi is

more spoken by the older men who learnt it when the Sikhs were masters. The Kashmiri language is rather harsh in sound but it seems to one who listens to a conversation without understanding to be expressive, and be able to be made emphatic, those who speak it are never at a loss to express every shade of meaning wanted.

About the economic condition of the people he says the country people are but poorly off. I think indeed that they get a fair meal but they can afford little beyond their simple food and are unable to provide against a rainy day. So when a bad year comes as though not often does sometimes happen they are put to great straits and will perhaps leave the country in numbers, for the isolation of the place is such that it is exceedingly difficult for any great importation of corn to be made to redress the failure of a harvest. Famines have in former times been occasion of migration of Kashmiri, the origin of the settlements of them we met, within various parts of outer hills and those in the Punjab.

Kashmir villages are very picturesque. The cottages are two storied in some parts. They have mud walls with a low sloping gable roof of thatchoor rough shingle. Of the city people he writes, "In Srinagar there is more variety in the inhabitants than in the country around, the people here are more divided up into castes, some of which are based on hereditary transmission of occupation. Kashmiri Pandits have some fine cast of features and their chief occupation is writing, great numbers of them get their living by their pen as Persian writers chiefly in the Government services. Pandits are used to less laborious work than Kashmiri Muslims. They do not spread generally over the country. Kashmiri Muslims are laborious and hard working. Women among them are generally good looking and have well shaped face, good brow and straight nose with black long hair. They wear like me long loose gown hanging in one fall from the shoulders to the ankles. About the city of Srinagar, he says it is the ancient and the present name of the city. During the medieval period it was called by the name of Shahar. Dr. Bernier in Aurangzeb' time and Forester who was in Srinagar, 1783A.D. uses the name Shahar and not

Srinagar, but when the Sikhs conquered Kashmir they restored the ancient name Srinagar but inhabitants call it Shahar. It is situated in the centre of the valley on the banks of Jhelum which is like that of the Thames at Kingston in width and rate of flow. It (Jhelum) is the chief artery of traffic. There are one or two streets and those but short ones that have anything like a continuous traffic while the river is always alive with boats. The river aspect of the city is extremely picturesque there is nothing like a quay or embankment and there is no line of regular buildings but each house is built independently, height uneven, off form varied and in material changing as to the proportion of stone and wooden. The view of these buildings uneven, irregular but for that very reason giving in the sun light varied lights and depths of shadow, of the line of them broken with numerous stone ghats or stairs thronged with people that lead from the river upto the streets and lanes of the city, of the mountain ridges showing above in form varying as one follows the turns of the river or the streams flowing steadily below with boats of all kinds coming and going on it is one remarkable interest and beauty.

(Fredrick Drew)

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